



SPIRITUAL LETTERS:

BY SEVERAL

EMINENT CHRISTIANS. K



C H E S T E R :

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P R E F A C E.



MOST of the following Letters were wrote by a Gentlewoman. Her style is easy, and elegant: I think not unlike, and equal to the late reverend Mr. HERVEY. The matter of them is excellent, and I know very few, though multitudes have been published, that are to be compar'd with them. At the time of her writing these Letters, I may presume, it was far from her thoughts that they would ever appear in public; and were it left now to herself, I suppose, her exceeding great modesty would prevent the world from profiting by them.

WHAT is very extraordinary in this Lady, she writes all her Letters, let them be ever so long, fair at once without the advantage of a rough Draught; and withal so correct, that when she has finished them, they need little or no amendment; and as free as if she was writing from a copy.

HER friends cannot but admire the beauty of her language, the spirit of devotion, the justness of sentiments, and prodigious depth of Divinity that run through all her Letters; though she has too mean an opinion of herself to imagine that any thing excellent or worthy public notice can proceed from her. However, be that as it will, the Reader shall judge for himself; and if he's religiously dispos'd, I doubt not, but that he will be as much edified as agreeably entertain'd.

As the Lady is still living, and the book will fall probably into her hands, the Editor is constrained to check his pen, lest in saying too much in commendation of her performances, he should offend her whom he very highly esteems, and should seem to flatter, which is very far from his intention; tho' he could wish to have the liberty of saying something of her character, which is truly an amiable one, and worthy of all her sex, both young and old, to copy after.—All her Letters are subscribed, M. L.

A few of these Letters were also wrote by a Clergyman of extraordinary piety, who has

P R E F A C E.

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has been and is still a faithful labourer in the Lord's vineyard.

ALL the rest, except a few, were wrote by a sincere Christian, who has had no other advantage of education, I believe, than that of Reading, Writing, and perhaps a little Arithmetic; yet notwithstanding this he is well instructed in the things of God, and I know not any one that is more so. He seems indeed to be one of the head scholars in Christ's school, and I imagine, but few have arrived to that measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ as he. If the Reader is acquainted with himself, and experiences any degree of the Love of God, he will perhaps in reading the Letters sign'd G. C. be of my opinion.

WHETHER the Reader be awakened or unawakened, converted or not converted, labouring under temptations or going on rejoicing, may the Lord sanctify these Letters to him; for there is that in one or the other of them which is suitable to every condition. In some there is good wholesome food for the Children of God, by which they may be nourished 'till they

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come

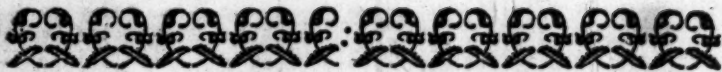
come to be perfect Men in Christ Jesus, complete, wanting nothing. In others is a Cordial for the Faint, a Staff for the Lame, and abundant consolations for those under temptations; oil and wine, and balm for the healing of those who are wounded, and a hammer to break in pieces the obstinate and obdurate heart. The Lord grant that all who read them may understand and receive all that benefit from them which they certainly may if they will but first implore the divine aid; and that the spirit of God may apply to the heart of every Reader what is written agreeable to his mind, to their eternal salvation, is the fervent prayer of

The EDITOR.



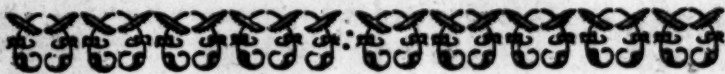
SPIRITUAL

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ERRATA.

IN Page 24, Line 17, for *Revelations* read *Revelation*. Page 33, Line 9, [*upwards*] for *No dear sister* read *No my dear sister*. Page 35, Line 9, for *esteemed* read *that I esteemed*. In the same Line, for *offer'd* read *have offer'd*. Page 48, Line 13, for *unworthly* read *unworthy*. Page 67, Line 1, for *convined* read *convinced*. Page III, for 1767, read 1768. Page 161, delete DEAR SISTER. Page 199, Line 22, for *fin* read *sin*. Page 205, Line 26, for *will* read *wilt*. Page 212, Line 23, for *work* read *works*. Page 220, Line 9, for *lust* read *lash*. Page 222, Line 2, for *backsliding* read *backslidings*. Page 224, Line 1, the Quotation Marks which follow *believes* should come after *ability* in the third Line; and after *ability* there should be a Comma instead of a Period.



☞ These LETTERS are sold in LONDON by Mr. ROBERT WINDSOR, Haberdasher, in *King-Street, Little Tower Hill*; GEORGE CLARK, at *Bangor House*, behind *St. Andrew's Church, Holborn*; and at Mrs. FOOTIT's Wine Vaults in *Great Russell-Street, Bloomsbury*.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS, &c.

To Miss L. H.

DEAR MISS,



I Am encouraged to the liberty I am about to take, by the obliging freedom with which you spoke of the state of your mind, at Mr. G.'s in your late illness; and which, together with your serious enquiry into some particular points of Mr. WESLEY's doctrine, has made me to hope, that you will make an impartial search into this important matter: and I have since earnestly pray'd, that when and where-ever you find the Pearl of great Price, you may be enabled to purchase it. Dr. YOUNG had a clear conception of what the Lord required of us in exchange for that eternal happiness which he is ever willing to bestow on all who will receive it: When overwhelm'd with a deep sense of divine goodness, he breaks out into these words:

“ O! Wherefore is the Deity so kind,
 “ Astonishing beyond Astonishment!
 “ Heav'n our Reward—for Heav'n enjoy'd
 below.”

Herein we discern the goodness of God in making Faith the condition of salvation, as he absolutely does, *Mark* xvi, 16. Herein he says,
 “ He

“ He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.” Now the Faith that is here spoken of, is, that which to every particular soul evidences, that Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me, and this produces Love, as it is express’d in the 4th Chap. of the 1st Epistle of St. *John*, and 19th V. “ We love him because he first loved us;” and as is said in the 16th Verse of the same Chapter, “ He that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” Thus has infinite wisdom made happiness the only way to happiness; and yet it is a narrow way, the way of holiness, and will admit of no turning aside.

Now the religion which the METHODISTS profess, without a multiplicity of words, (which only tends to puzzle the enquirer) may be thus explained: That in order to attain everlasting life, we must first know ourselves to be lost helpless sinners, both originally and actually, and turn to God by true repentance; after which we must receive the knowledge of salvation by the remission of our sins, and then press forward after holiness, which is the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus. And all this is not effected by our own strength; for of ourselves we are not sufficient so much as to think a good thought; it is only by the power and grace of the holy spirit of God, which our Saviour assures us in the 11th chapter of St. *Luke*, and the 13th verse, he will no more withhold from those who pray for it, than an earthly parent would deny any necessary gift from his child when ask’d for it.

I have made free to select and offer to your consideration, a few among many other texts of Scripture, which, to my apprehension, incontestibly prove these divine truths; and as the great day of our Lord hasteneth apace, and our lives upon earth are as a shadow, so soon they pass away, and we are gone, I trust the weightiness of this concern will plead my excuse, who am, with the utmost sincerity and respect,

DEAR MISS,

Your affectionate humble servant,

M. L.

PROOFS of the NECESSITY and DUTY of REPENTANCE.

Isaiah lv. 6. **S**EELK ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.

Isa. lxiv. 6. But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away. *Hosea* xii. 6. Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.

Hosea xiii. 9. O Israel! thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help.

Matt. iv. 17. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matt. v. 4. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Luke

Luke xiii. 3. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Acts ii. 38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts iii. 19. Repent ye therefore, and be converted.

PROMISES of PARDON.

Isa. xliii. 25. **I** Even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

Jer. xxxi. 34. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Hosea viii. 7. Israel shall cry unto me, My God we know thee.

Amos iii. 3. Can two walk together except they be agreed?

John iii. 3. Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Rom. viii. 15. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father.

V. 16. The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

St. John's 1st Epistle, i. 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

ii. 12. I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

v. 13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life; and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

EXHORTATIONS to HOLINESS.

Matt. v. 48. **B**E ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Cor. 2 Ep. vii. 1. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Heb. xii. 14. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

1 Pet. i. 15. But as he which called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. *16 V.* Because it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy.

2 Pet. iii. 14. Wherefore beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

To



To Miss L. H.

DEAR MISS,

THE apprehension of having occasioned you uneasiness by my writing, really gave me no small pain, notwithstanding I was clear in the motive which urged me thereto; which was no other than a tender regard for a soul which I know my Saviour bought with so great a price, and an earnest desire, if possibly I could, to further such an one in coming to the enjoyment of his free love. And believe me, dear Miss, nothing else should have prevailed on me to have taken a liberty which on any less occasion I should myself have condemn'd as impertinent.

You do me the honour to desire my opinion of your present state, which I must own differs in many points from what I have ever heard or read concerning those who have had a work of grace on their souls; as most have at the very beginning thereof found a distaste for every worldly delight; and some have gone almost to an unnecessary contrary extreme. Neither do I think it agreeable to the law and the testimony, I mean that sure guide, the unerring word of God, which assures us if we will be the disciples of the holy Jesus, we must take up our cross and follow him. And in another Scripture we are expressly told, that "He hath left us an example that we should walk in his steps." Let us then impartially consider the whole tenor of his life, and compare it with our own; and though it may be

be argued, that we cannot be perfect even as he was perfect, yet surely we must be convinced, that in many instances we might more exactly copy that divine pattern than we do. What can be more contrary than to be a person of pleasure and gaiety, and yet to expect union and communion with him who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs. God forbid that I should in the least discourage any one in the pursuit of happiness; I am sure I am far from such a design. I only mean to point out those things that I think must necessarily prove hindrances to this great end of our being; and if any sentiments I have declared be contradictory to the word of God, I should be truly sorry, and sincerely beg pardon for having so freely enforced it. Give me leave, dear Miss, to add, as concerning yourself, that I do believe the Lord is at this gracious season, tendering the offers of grace and life through his Son; for I can by no means think, that those feelings you speak of (particularly that confidence in prayer) are any thing less than the drawings of God, and the invaluable tokens of his willingness to bestow farther blessings upon you: And I greatly rejoice in your determination of searching the sacred Scriptures, well knowing, that they (together with the enlightening spirit of God, which you must not fail to pray for when you read) are sufficient to make you wise to eternal salvation, without any other help; and that you may know the way clearly, and pursue it steadily, shall be the constant prayer of,

DEAR MISS,

Your much obliged humble servant,

M. L.

B

DEAR



DEAR MISS,

I Can't express how much I thought myself obliged by your affable reception of my note; and though I would not too frequently trouble you, yet I should have express'd my gratitude, and have assur'd you of the secrecy of it sooner, had I not accidentally heard, that you were for some time absent from home. I was so careful that my writing should not be mentioned, as to conceal it even from Mr. G. nor did Miss H. who was then here, know any thing of my design.

YOUR judgment of my opinion, in regard to the pleasures of this world, is quite right; nor can I help flattering myself, that a careful perusal of the Scriptures, together with a deep meditation on the nature of that sweetness, resulting from a serious attention to religion which you have already felt, and which is only the first drawings of the love of God, will at length work in you a clear conviction of that truth also. Permit me, dear Miss, to ask you, if you could not in those happy moments, look with an holy contempt on all the vanities of life, feeling in your own soul a capability of more solid and sublime delights.

I hope you will pardon the freedom I am still bold to take, in enquiring if when present at the late concert, you felt any satisfaction equal to that before mentioned? or if you really think, that when you enjoy those pleasures in a still higher degree, and that constantly without interruption, you could be prevail'd upon to frequent a place,

place, which would then be as contrary to the disposition of your soul, as darkness to the light? But perhaps you may object, that you are not yet arrived to that happy state: To which I answer, that as the Christian's way is narrow, so is the entrance into it strait, and those things which we cannot delight in when we love God, we should not allow ourselves in while we are seeking so to do; especially, as such a conduct must needs be a great impediment. I believe the reading of the 55th chapter of *Isaiah* might be greatly bless'd to you, as that in some measure points out the small value of what we are too much inclin'd to labour after, and the substantial happiness which God is ever willing to bestow upon us. You will observe in the first verse, that we are exhorted to come and buy those blessings, and yet it is without money and without price; whereby is clearly shewn, that what God requires us to give up is in itself of no worth, that it is less than nothing in comparison of what we shall receive in exchange. That the Lord may teach you his divine will, and strengthen you amidst every opposition to obey it, shall be the continued prayer of,

Dear Miss,

Your much obliged humble servant,

M. L.



DEAR

DEAR MADAM,

I Should have been more explicit in my answer to your last note, had I not an opportunity of recommending to your perusal Dr. GUISE on that subject; but as you might not have found leisure to have read that author, and having perceived from a late conversation, (what before I could hardly have credited,) that those who doubt of the divinity of our blessed Lord, profess to believe the scriptures, and even to prove their assertions from thence. I now take the liberty to offer to your serious meditation some texts (amongst many others that might be collected) which I think convincing to the most dubious mind, and undeniable proofs of this so interesting, and much disputed point. And first, in the 7th chapter of *Isaiah*, and 14th verse, it is foretold, that a *Virgin should conceive and bear a Son, and should call his Name Immanuel*; and St. *Matthew*, in the first chapter of his gospel, and the 22d and 23d verses, having first related the particular occurrences of our Saviour's birth, says, *Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, Behold a Virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his Name, Immanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us.* In the same prophet, and at the 9th chapter, and 6th verse, are these words, *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* Could such titles suit a Being less than

God? And in the 13th of Zechariah, and verse 7 h, it is said, *Awake O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.* That this referred to our Saviour we read in the 26th chapter and 31st verse of St. Matt. in which the fulfilment of that prophecy is recorded. Nor can words be more express than those of St. John's, chap. i. 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* Verse 3d, *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* And St. Paul in the 3d chap. of his epistles to the Hebrews declares, that *he which built all things is God.* But to return to St. John's gospel, chap. i. 4. *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.* Verse 9. 11. *That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* And he himself says in the 10th chap. and 30th verse, *I and my Father are one.* I believe it is allowed by all, that God only is omnipresent, and that Christ was, is proved from his own words in the 3d chap. of St. John, and the 13th verse, *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven.* In the 5th of St. John, and 23d verse, we read, that *all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.* In St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians, chap. ii. and verse 6, *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* Colossians, chap.

chap. ii. and verse 8, Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Verse 9. and 10. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are compleat in him, which is the head of all principality and power. Hebrews i. and 3, Who being the brightness of his glory, and the expresse image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. St. Paul, in his 1st epistle to Timothy, chap. vi, 15, 16. speaking of Christ, calls him the blessed and only potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honour and power everlasting, Amen. Titus, chap. ii. ver. 13. 14. Looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. In Revelations, chap. xxii. and verse 16. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. As he was God, he was the root, that is the source and fountain from which David and all others derive their life and being. As he was Man, he was the offspring of David, having descended of his house and lineage. The first epistle of St. Paul to Timothy, iii. 16. " And
 " without controversy great is the mystery of
 " godliness: God was manifested in the flesh,
 " justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached
 " unto

“ unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world,
 “ received up to glory.” That these things
 are mysterious was not denied even by an inspir’d
 Apostle; nor do any of the present professors of
 true religion pretend to say, that the doctrine of
 the Trinity is easy to be comprehended: But will
 any one say, that is a sufficient reason for reject-
 ing it? On the contrary, is it not a great de-
 gree of pride for a poor finite creature to attempt
 to find out it’s infinite Creator to perfection? Are
 not many of his lower works too wonderful for
 us to descant upon? Why then may we not suppose
 himself to be still more wonderful? Is not the
 very union of our own soul and body a surprising
 thought; May we not on this occasion apply to
 ourselves what our Saviour said to *Nicodemus* with
 a little variation of the words: *St. John* iii. 12.
 “ If I have told you of earthly things, and ye
 “ believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you
 “ of heavenly things?” O that we were hum-
 ble, that we would for the future lay aside all
 vain reasonings, and submit to, and be thankful
 for, the divine revelation, which God has been
 pleased to make of himself, and of his will to
 us! this being the only way to come to that
 knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus
 Christ whom he hath sent, in which consists our
 eternal life; seeing God resisteth the proud, but
 giveth grace to the humble, as *St. James* tells
 us in his 4th chap. and 6th verse of his epistle.

I trust, my dear Madam, you are determined
 to abide by the law and the testimony for your
 conviction and confirmation in these truths; it is
 our blessed Lord’s advice, and the best that we can
 follow. He tells us, *John* y. 39. “ To search the
 “ scriptures,

“ scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.” Some have alledged, that one part of scripture frequently contradicts another; but they have not been able to prove this by one single text: And I must beg leave to affirm, that it is a mistake arising from a too superficial perusal of those sacred pages; which, if studied with humility, diligence, and prayer, would appear beautifully connected throughout. There is a deep sense in that declaration of St. Paul’s, 1 Cor. xii. 3. “ Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.” That is, I believe that no man has so deep a knowledge of the divinity of Jesus Christ, as he, who being awakened from the dead sleep of sin, is either earnestly seeking, or has already attained an interest in his most precious blood; for such an one not only sees but feels that nothing short of an infinite ransom could have atoned for his sins committed against infinite justice; and who but the Almighty could have laid down such a ransom! No, had there been love enough in the breast of an arch-angel to have inclined him to such a task, he would have fallen very short of power to have performed it.

MAY the blessed Jesus, the true and living God, savingly convince you of his almighty power, by working in your heart such a happy and necessary change, as none but Omnipotence can effect: I say necessary, because he himself assures us, that except we are born again, we cannot see his heavenly kingdom. St. John, iii. 3.

And

Aed St. *Paul*, in his epistle to the *Hebrews*, xii. 14. says, that "without holiness, no man can see the Lord." That God is able to create us anew, we read in the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 verses of the 18th of *Jeremiah*, and that he is as willing, we are told in the 18th of *Ezek.* where God declares "he has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth."

I trust the importance of the subject will, in some measure, plead my excuse for troubling you with so long an epistle; for, believe me, dear Madam, I wish your present and eternal happiness, and am,

Your affectionate humble servant,

M. L.



DEAR MADAM,

I Believe it will be allowed one of the greatest satisfactions a generous mind experiences, is that which results from opportunities of doing acts of kindness and obligingness to others; and as I really believe yours to be such; I flatter myself that you will not refuse, even me this one last favour that I take the liberty to beg before I leave *Antigua*, which is, that you will excuse my freedom in once more reminding you of the things that belong to your peace. Indeed I do not attempt to mention a matter of such vast importance without a deep sense of my own insufficiency,

ency, but am encouraged to this duty from a conviction that God is able to work by the meanest instruments, and out of the mouths of babes and sucklings to perfect his praise. And O ! that you would forget the prejudicing terms of METHODIST, and be intent on this alone, that you, that every child of man are by the unalterable decree of nature's law, born to die, that your soul is immortal, and therefore all its concerns worthy your highest regard.

You dear Madam, undoubtedly believe that there is one supreme Being, by whom all worlds were made, and are sustained ; a God to whom all hereafter must render their accounts, and be punished or rewarded, according to the deeds done in the body ; you must consequently suppose him to be infinitely perfect ; if otherwise, it would be far more rational to imagine there was none ; for was he at all defective, he could not be God ; even our reason, weak and depraved as it is, teaches us thus much ; for we find the monitor within conveying to the minds of children and of the most unthinking and illiterate mortals, an idea that God is good. And then, O ! let reason, and let conscience answer ; can there be any thing more interesting to an immortal spirit, then to insure the favour, and avoid the displeasure of such an excellent, such an all-powerful Being ! But alas ! how know we to obtain the one, or to escape the other, if he has given us no direction ? And how shall we reconcile with infinite goodness his having left us to wander in such a perplexing uncertainty : Or, does it consist with justice to try us by a law which was never delivered, and to expect our obedience to his

his will tho' never revealed to us. This does not come up to the common rules of justice practised even by poor fallen creature man, and shall infinite love express itself in cruelty and tyranny, or rather, shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Surely he does do right: Surely he will minister true judgment unto all mankind; but some have imagined their reason a sufficient rule; tho' if duly considered, I believe it will appear that this does not vindicate divine justice; seeing all have not an equal share of understanding, and that even the wisest often err in their judgment with regard to matters of far less consequence, the affairs of this life; a sufficient proof that the most enlightened minds have need of divine guidance.

So that in order to form right conceptions of God, we cannot but conclude that he has given us laws for the regulating of our conduct in this life, upon the due observance or breaking of which depends our eternal happiness or woe. It next concerns us where we may find this heavenly guide, on what book we may most reasonably fix as most worthy of God to dictate, and of us to receive and practice. And surely we ought to incline to that whose rules if followed, will be most perfective of our nature, and what in this respect can stand in competition with the bible? many things may be said in proof of its authority, such as the purity of its precepts, the sublimity of its stile, join'd with the plainness of expression, (which I believe never was, or will be equall'd by any human writings,) its wonderful preservation for so many ages amongst such inveterate enemies, and its being as a fountain from
whence

whence all other religious books in every age have, as so many springs or rivulets, issued forth, though too many, to the perversion and obscuration of the sacred text: But notwithstanding these, and many other considerations in it's favour, it cannot be the word of God, nor ought it to be received, or believed as such; if Jesus is not the Christ, or if there is any other name given under heaven whereby mankind may be saved; or if he is not God over all, equal with the Father, and blessed for ever; if he has not all power in heaven and in earth; and in a word, if he is not the Maker of our frame, the Redeemer of our souls, and the source and fountain of our happiness and life: for this is clearly taught from the first of *Genesis*, to the last of *Revelations*. And it would be most absurd to suppose that the God of all power could not have preserved his truths from such a mixture of falsehood and error; and to suppose that he could but would not, would still be derogating from his justice.

O Madam! Is it possible that you can any longer be contented to live in uncertainty with regard to your most interesting concerns! Would you if at a great distance from your native home, travel on with cheerfulness in an uncertain road! In such a case, how gladly would you receive, and how punctually observe the directions you should meet with in the way! How highly would you especially prize a well drawn map of the parts you were to pass through! And how reviving would it be to your weary spirits, to know assuredly, that you were in the right path, and every day approaching nearer to your desired rest!

Such

Such is the situation of our immortal souls. We are travelling through time to an endless eternity. Happy were it for us, if we did indeed consider ourselves as strangers and pilgrims upon earth, and as those that have no abiding city here, surely we should then no longer be amused with the delusive pleasures of this mortal life, or deprest under it's momentary care, but with the utmost alacrity pursue our way to that kingdom that cannot be moved, to that city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. But I may venture to affirm that we shall never be reckoned with that happy number, nor ever attain thereunto except we follow the directions given us in the holy scriptures. These are indeed an exact map of our journey to the land of *Canaan*, to the heavenly *Jerusalem*.

O! how am I concerned, when I see any child of man whose eternal happiness I know to be depending, disputing the truth of the scriptures, and that chiefly because they declare the eternal power and godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. If such did but consider the depth of *Adam's* fall, and of all mankind in him, they would then be convinced that none but the arm omnipotent could raise them up, and reinstate them in the favour of God. To a soul thus enlightened, thus humbled and awakened, death would be far more welcome than a confirmation of the sceptic's creed. For if Christ were not Almighty, he would not be an all-sufficient Saviour for us, whose total depravation needs a thorough change; or as the scripture expresses it, a being born again, being created a-new, which no less than the power that first created us, could possibly ef-

fect. To this knowledge of ourselves (without which we shall never enter into life) the scripture leads us. We are therein informed that we were originally made in the divine likeness; a work worthy of our God, without blemish or defect; that we were stamp'd with his image, which consists of righteousness and true holiness; that as a consequent of this we enjoy'd his favour, which is better, far better than the life itself; both which privileges we lost by our first parent's rebellion, and must recover again, if ever we hope to be eternally blessed and happy in the kingdom of God. But it also informs us, that we are by nature not only sinful but helpless, and no more able to atone for past offences, or to change our own hearts, than we were to give ourselves a being when we had none. In short, the wonderful and great method used for our redemption, sets forth in the clearest light, the depth and danger of our fall; for not the highest arch-angel could have wrought the mighty work, but the Lord Jesus; the great Jehovah undertook our desperate cause, and hath fully accomplished that for us, which we could not; he hath made a full perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and hath purchased eternal life, for all those who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality. But he requires us to seek for these blessings, for he will not work upon us irresistibly; that would be to destroy our free agency, which is not the design of the gospel; for life and death, a blessing and a curse are still set before us, and it remains for us to make the choice, tho' he tenderly exhorts us to chuse life. O! Madam, which will you chuse? I cannot forbear

bear declaring to you, that if you reject the Lord Jesus Christ, you do chuse death, for he alone is the way, the truth, and the life; and my soul for yours, you will never be saved, except he saves you; and when we appear before the judgment seat, I shall not be ashamed of this testimony. The holy scripture declares, *1 John v, 12*, "He that hath the son hath life; and he that hath not the son of God hath not life." If this book then be true, how dreadful must their condition be who believe not on his name!

Excuse my freedom, dear Madam; believe me, it proceeds from a sincere desire for your welfare, for the love of Christ constrains me to wish the happiness of all mankind; but that is only to be found in God: It has no residence on earth, but in the truly pious soul; and whoever searches for it in any thing beneath the sun, will be continually disappointed. O! do not wrong the religion of Jesus Christ, by imagining it a gloomy melancholy thing, that only serves to embitter life; when in reality it is that, and that alone, which affords us pure and unmixed joys; joys that lessen every grief, make life's severest pangs tolerable, and heighten every satisfactory dispensation of providence, tho' it is not a friend to vice, vanity, or the fashionable follies of the world: All which if duly considered, must be acknowledged far beneath the dignity of a soul made for God, that is under the guardian care of angels, and that must flourish in eternal life and vigour, when the world and the works that are therein, shall be consumed by devouring fire. Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, that our life is even as a vapour, and that we know not the day

nor the hour, when this earthly tabernacle shall return unto the dust, and our spirits unto God who gave them, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness; how ought we to be continually upon our guard, always endeavouring as much as possible, to be exercised in those employments in which we could most calmly and resignedly receive the awful summons, being as the scriptures express it, like unto men waiting for the bridegroom; and when he appears, may you be found perfectly ready to enter into the marriage feast of the lamb, which comprehends the highest privilege, and the most perfect bliss that can be desired, by

Dear Madam,

Your sincere well-wisher,

and humble servant,

M. L.

The following is a Letter from a Quaker Woman to W. B. of PHILADELPHIA, but sent to him when he was in ENGLAND.

DEAR FRIEND,

AS I am not like, according to thy request, and mine own inclination, to have the satisfaction of seeing thee, I take this opportunity of saluting thee by a line in that love which nearly united our spirits at our first seeing each other. Yea, before I beheld thee with my natural eyes, a prayer was inspired in my breast that thou mightest be an instrument of good to me, knowing

ing the need I had of being brought forward in the way of righteousness; which petition I have cause to believe was heard and accepted by the great I AM, as I have found thee a messenger of consolation to my distressed soul. By thy exemplary deportment, steady conduct, solid and edifying conversation, and by thy sound and pertinent doctrine, so well adapted to the states of the people that I have seen thee labour amongst, I am incited to make some endeavours, though weak, of coming up faithfully in the footsteps of the flocks of the companions of Christ. Agreeably hereto, I have formed resolutions to practise yet greater degrees of mortification and self-denial, which I trust through grace to be enabled to perform, having great need of the same.

I write not this to exalt the creature, or flatter my friend, but to magnify that grace by which thou art what thou art, and to contribute my mite towards strengthening thy hands in the way of well-doing: I am apt to believe the strongest have sometimes need of it; though it may be I only judge from myself, who am at times ready to faint in my mind through fear, that I shall never be a conqueror over those potent enemies which oppose my happiness. I have compared my spirit to a kind of immaterial fire, that would be continually catching at, or fastening on something coelestial or terrestrial; which ever it centres in, it may justly be call'd an inhabitant of: And as it has a natural tendency to fix on earthly objects, that are continually assailing it by reason of my senses being pleas'd therewith, so prone is my soul to fall, after being elevated,

from coelestial things, as iron, having been once pois'd in the air, to fall therefrom, or to sink into itself again, as iron cast into the water; but that efficacious operation which caus'd the ax (2 KINGS) to swim, is required upon the soul, and may be compared to a loadstone, which attracts it upwards contrary to it's nature. And as iron, in time, loses this attraction, and returns to it's natural position; so is my soul ready to do, when I wait not carefully for the renewing grace of the spirit, by which we are translated from the kingdom of darkness into that of light. But so painful are the operations of the sword of the spirit, that when it comes to sever from my soul the spirit of the world, to which it has a great appetite, and to divide asunder between the joints and the marrow, and those things I am by nature most attach'd to, I grow uneasy of this embodied state of imperfection, whereby I am so toss'd between heaven and earth, that I often long to be dissolved and to be with Christ. Tho' this desire seems to have something laudable in it, shewing my union with the great Creator of all things to be stronger than all the ties of nature, yet I am ready to fear it proceeds from the corrupt source of self-love, which desires an exemption from pain and trials, before I have filled up in my body that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ. Perhaps this is excuseable, as our holy pattern has left us an example; who when he begun to taste of the bitter cup, prayed earnestly and repeatedly, that if it was possible it might pass from him, though it was with the utmost submission, saying, Not my will, but thine be done. Surely, never did nature and grace exert themselves in so powerful a manner, each striving

striving for the mastery, as it did at that awful time when the salvation of mankind was depending upon the suffering of the Son of God, in bearing all the wrath of an incensed Deity, incurr'd by the sins of the whole world. Then he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him. He then felt the wrath of his Father by reason of sin, who knew no sin, when the sword of God's indignation and justice was drawn, which could be no otherwise appeas'd than by spilling his blood. Well might he drop those emphatical words, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." And what shall I say, as if he had been afraid of uttering that petition which nature dictated, sinking under the weight of present oppression, and the apprehension of future misery; and well becoming a son that had never offended his parent, says, "Save me from this hour!" But remembering the end for which he came into the world, he recalls the request, saying, "But for this came I unto this hour." What that could be grievous to his manhood did he not suffer? At his birth a manger, a place for beasts, was his reception; neither did the ungrateful world afford him much better through the whole course of his pilgrimage upon earth; the foxes had holes, and the birds had nests; but he had not where to lay his head. He was set at nought by the then visible church and high professors of religion, a people who had received the oracles of God: He was betrayed by one disciple, denied by another, and forsaken by them all, at that glorious juncture when he was treading the wine-press alone in a most painful and ignominious death upon the cross between two thieves;

thieves: When he rode in triumph, many followed him, crying, Hosannah, but none were desirous of being his companions now: All his acquaintance, and even the very women, who are by nature the most tender, and had followed him from *Galilee*, now stood afar off. O my soul! treasure up these things faithfully in thy remembrance, with this valuable consideration, that all this he suffered in part for thy sake; without which thou must have been irretrievably lost in eternal woe, and as a fugitive and a vagabond have been driven from the face of thy God. Rejoice therefore in thy tribulation, and count it all joy when thou fallest into divers temptations for the refining of thy faith.

I hope thou wilt excuse my dwelling so long upon this subject: Of a truth it is a favourite theme with me, which I cannot too much preponderate. It is therefore needless to beg excuse, and I recall the words; for surely it is the employment of seraphic spirits, and will be so to all eternity, to admire the mystery of redeeming love, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and wisdom, riches, and honour, and blessing, for ever and ever."

It is now time to draw to a conclusion, which I shall do with hearty desires for thy preservation, and for the prosperity of the glorious work thou art engaged in, hoping thou wilt remember poor me when it fares well with thee. Please to let me hear from thee, if freedom and leisure will permit: But I shall leave that and all things of this kind to the direction of our great and good

good Master, not laying thee under any restraint but love; well knowing the various engagements that must necessarily employ thy time and attention. I am, with true love,

Thy assured friend,

And sister in the fellowship of the gospel,

M. P.



To Mrs. S—— of KENDAL.

DEAR MADAM,

Dec. 13, 1764.

WE received yours, and are extremely obliged to you for the affectionate regard you express for us; and that Jesus may daily impart more and more of that divine principle to your soul, from which you profess it flows, is the sincere and united wish of us both. We do not in the least confine the operations of his spirit, or the blessedness of which we speak to any particular sect or denomination whatsoever, and would be far from persuading you to forsake a church, whose articles, homilies, and ceremonies we ourselves so much revere for their similitude with the written word of God. No dear sister, what we contend for is the faith which was once delivered to the saints, that faith which justifies the sinner, unites the soul to Jesus, and works by love; and before the receiving of which our church assures us, our works cannot be acceptable in the sight of God, not having in them the nature of this faith. We can assure you the doctrine preached at our house is entirely consonant to the above mentioned

mentioned authorities ; and as the hours appointed do not interfere with the public worship of the church, we would advise you to hear for yourself, as we think it would prove effectual in removing any prejudice you may have conceived, and perhaps be attended with advantage to your soul. We are sensibly obliged by your kind offer of serving us, but have nothing to request at present, but to be remembered in your addresses to the throne of mercy, where I trust you will not be forgotten by,

Dear Madam,

Your obliged humble Servants,

G. G. M. L.



To the Reverend Mr. J. W.

REV. SIR,

I Received with great pleasure the favour of your kind permission to write to you ; a liberty I should have taken before, had not a consideration of your many engagements, and the fear of intruding upon your valuable time prevented me. I was the more desirous of this privilege that I might have an opportunity of removing from your mind, the doubt that seemed to be conceived of my not retaining the affectionate respect for you that I once profest, and which I now beg leave to assure my honoured minister is not, nor ever has been in the least diminished. It is true, I have experienced many vicissitudes, have sympathized in the perplexities of the church, and known the plague of my own heart, yet by a miracle of supporting grace,

grace, have never lost my shield or varied from the truths you preach, and which I may without boasting say, I received in the love thereof, and not as the word of man, but as it really is, the word of God, which I experienced to be productive of spiritual life to my soul. In whatever part of the world I have been cast, I can with truth aver that I have exprest myself to others, esteemed you, and offer'd up my prayers for you, as my pastor and spiritual father. Such, Rev. Sir, have been invariably my sentiments regarding myself in this relation to you: I have been induced to acquiesce (by Mr. G's. appointment) in endeavouring to be as useful as possible among the little flock in this place, of which I have the happiness to acquaint you there is an increase, and among whom at present subsist much life and simplicity. The great shepherd exemplifies his love by many encouragements; he unites his children's hearts to me, so that some who were greatly averse to meeting with me at first, seem to love me exceedingly, having experienced the divine presence in the midst when we assemble in his name. I trust, Rev. Sir, to be assisted by your prayers: I shall always pay the utmost deference to your orders and rules, and esteem a line from you in some leisure moments among some of my highest satisfactions and temporal indulgences.

THAT many years of uninterrupted health may be added to you, Rev. Sir, and that all the present and eternal blessings of the new covenant, may crown and reward your successful labours, is the sincere prayer of, Rev. Sir, your affectionate tho' unworthy daughter in the gospel,

M. L.
SIR,



SIR,

St. Kitts, June 6, 1765.

IN much uncertainty of getting an opportunity of sending a letter, I have endeavoured (though so sick as to render me almost incapable) to acknowledge with gratitude the receipt of your kind note. I am much obliged by your best wishes for my happiness, and shall do myself the pleasure if the Lord brings me to my desired port, to commence the correspondence you propose, and which will be equally agreeable to myself. In the mean time, I sincerely wish to yourself and family, the blessing of health, and the enjoyment of that happiness which this fluctuating world can neither give nor take away. May the Lord be your continual guide and protector! May his grace be always sufficient for you, and the great work he has begun in your soul, be never hindered nor obstructed by any occurrence in life, but brought to its ultimate perfection. I last night wrote to Mrs. G——, Miss Jane and Miss G——, which letters are already gone ashore. You will hear by them most of the particulars that have passed since my embarkation. I have this only to add, that I have found the presence of the Lord with me more or less ever since: My mind is in a measure stay'd upon him, and I find I can rely upon him, and can at present trust him both with soul and body. I have a comfortable hope, that he will keep That safe which I have committed to him, and that in the great day of his appearing, if not before, I shall have a joyful meeting with all my Christian friends, never to hear of parting more. Please to present my respects

present my respects to your Mamma, and brother,
my love to your sister, and believe me

Your much obliged Friend,

The signal for sailing and humble servant,
has been given
some time.

M. L.



LONDON, *Aug. 1,* 1762.

SIR,

I Take this opportunity to comply with your obliging desire of knowing some of the particulars of my voyage, as also to perform the promise I gave you of so doing.

UPON duly considering mine own nothingness and insignificancy, I really think myself a subject too mean for a letter, and am almost unwilling to trouble any person by taking up their valuable time in reading one from me; but when on the other hand I consider the truly christian spirit that delights in hearing of the mercies and goodness of God, even to the meanest and least of his creatures, (especially as such instances in a peculiar manner exemplify the freedom of his love, and of that mercy which is over all his works,) I am encouraged to speak of his gracious dealings to me. Know then, Sir, that during the whole passage, the Lord kept my soul stay'd upon him in a manner unusual to my common experience, whereby my mind was preserv'd in perfect peace. I had more reason to be satisfied

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with

with the persons who went with me in the vessel than I could have expected with worldly people. The ship was a good one, and the captain careful. We had a remarkable quick passage, but were not exempt from trials, for we had dead calms and hard gales: But through all, as hitherto, through the various vicissitudes of this life, hath the Lord's arm supported, lead, and at last conducted me to the haven where I desired to be. Since my arrival, I have been greatly delighted with the plentiful means of grace; but have neither enjoyed them nor profited by them so much as I hope to do when my mind is a little more compos'd, and when I am a little more retir'd, than the love of my friends will at present permit me to be. Miss F. and N. M. have done me the favour to call upon me once or twice, to whom I delivered your letters: They are both well, and very greatly altered for the better by divine transforming grace. The parcel of letters you gave me, which were tied up and not directed, I had forgot from whom I had them 'till I had opened the inclosure; and those letters that were for *Ireland*, I put carefully into the post-office. I trust your whole family enjoy their health, and that your soul improves in grace, which I shall be extreamly glad to hear; as I am more and more convinced, that all happiness consists in and flows from that. True, there are pleasing scenes in life; that which has in the course of Providence just now occur'd to me is one of them, that of being restored to my family and friends. But what is this, or all this world can yield, without my God? 'Tis empty all! 'tis all an aching void!

False are the joys, which earth or sense inspires,
That clog the soul, and damp her purer fires.

Mr.

Mr. J. W. is in *Ireland*, and a bad state of health has for a time silenced Mr. C. W. but we have a very fine minister, Mr. M. with us, besides a very great many excellent lay preachers; so that there is no complaining of that sort in our streets. May the Lord make us wise to improve all the blessings which he delights to give.

REMEMBER me kindly to your brother and sister, and believe me, Sir,

Your sincere friend,
and sister in the Lord,

M. L.



LONDON, *Aug. 4, 1762.*

My very dear Miss POLLY,

YOU have often heard me acquiesce with that sentiment of *Dr. Young*, that ne'er to meet or ne'er to part is peace. And indeed, my dear, experience has confirm'd me in it; I have felt much, too much to be express'd on our separation. Nor has it yet been in the power of any of the agreeable occurrences I have met with in *England*, to erase from my heart the tenderest sensations on every remembrance of you. When upon the sea, and to my apprehension in some danger, you were particularly brought to my mind. I blessed the providence that so kindly interposed in hindering your coming with me; but since I came to *London*, and now that I am agreeably situated, I could often wish for your company, did I not know that the will of God in all things

is best, and that in a perfect conformity to that consists the creature's happiness, and not as we vainly imagine in this or the other circumstance of life. O! my dear, seek to be given up to him, to have every wish resigned to his will; for when you are no longer your own but his, by a free will offering of that which he requires, even your heart, you will then know by happy experience, what perfect peace and liberty means. I know, my love, that there is a great deal to be wrought in you, before you arrive to that happy state; but I also know that your redeemer is Almighty, that he waiteth to be gracious, and that he is not straitned as to time. O! pray him to make you ready and willing to receive all his love delights to give. Plead his promises, plead his power, plead your own necessities, and that you may be enabled to do this with more earnestness, beg the Lord to make you deeply sensible of them. O! my love, learn to number your uncertain days, that you may apply your heart with diligence to true wisdom.

You will hear in my letter to your dear Mamma of my niece W——'s death, and may well remember my mentioning her as a very fine girl of a great genius, none more promising to live than she; but alas! how soon has death levell'd her blooming tabernacle with the dust! Now my dear, we see in this instance (as in thousands more) that youth and health as well as old age, are obnoxious to disease and death; therefore there is no time for delays in the great business of working out our salvation. I beg my dear will write frequently to me, and let me know how yourself and dear sisters go on in the most interesting.

resting affairs of time, that which I have been just mentioning. Please to give my love to Miss *Alice*, and tell her I love her in sincerity, and would have wrote to her now, but am straitned for time, but she may expect a letter from me the next opportunity according to promise.

I remain,

My dear Miss POLLY's

affectionate friend and humble servant,

M. L.



To Mr. J. W.

Dear BROTHER, LONDON, June 1, 1758.

I Received your kind and welcome letter, and was glad to hear of your safe and pleasant journey to *Bedford*, and of the happy state of your soul. O! may that holy joy, and humble love be more abundantly increased in your heart, 'till the sacred flame has consumed the last remains of sin; and then my brother, when the wheat is fully ripe, you shall (according to the longing desires of your soul) be gather'd into the garner, and be for ever with the Lord. I have been very ill since I saw you, and find that as sickness is rather a time for using grace than for getting it, we have great need to exercise all diligence in time of health, to make our calling and election sure. O! pray for me, as I for you, that I may stop short of none of the blessings of the new covenant; and let us praise the dear redeemer for what he has already done for us. How many circumstances at this time conspire to make me

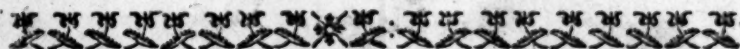
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wretched

wretched, if destitute of his grace and love, but possess of these, I remain happy in the midst of a turbulent world, tho' so much entangled with its cares. May the Lord bless you in the place where you now are, and bring you home in his good time in safety, and sweetly lead you through this wilderness, 'till with his church you are brought up out of it, leaning upon the beloved of your soul; in the mean time forget not at the throne,

Your affectionate sister in the Lord,

M. L.



My dear MADAM,

THE tenderest regard and sincere affection that I have long experienced in my heart towards you, renders it impossible for me not to be very sensibly affected with your affliction. Indeed my dear madam, I truly sympathize with you, and would if in my power most gladly bear part of your burden, and administer consolation to your drooping spirits; but alas! creatures are but broken cisterns, and there are trials incident to human life, in which the efforts of our dearest friends fail of the desired effect; but (O! soul reviving thought,) there is no afflictive circumstance in life, nor any distress, or pain in death, in which Jesus is not a present and all-sufficient help. Permit me then dear madam, to remind you of him, who is our compassionate high priest, of whom it is recorded, that he, for our sakes, became a man of sorrow, and was himself acquainted

ed with griefs. I trust that he does and will support you, and I cannot doubt, but that his gracious purpose in depriving you of an earthly spring of comfort, is to unite you more closely to himself, the fountain of permanent bliss. I hope my dear madam will accept of an assurance of the tenderest love, and continual prayers of,

Dear Madam,

Your most affectionate humble servant,

M. L.



ANTIGUA. *June 21, 1760.*

My DEAR BROTHER,

YOURS dated *April 30*, came safe to hand the 13th instant, and proved a reviving cordial to my then drooping spirits, being at that time under an exercise which is some what rare with me. It was that of bodily disorder, accompanied with great heaviness of soul; the pleasure your letter afforded me, so elated my mind, that I hardly felt my indisposition 'till the next day, when my feverish symptoms returned, but thro' divine mercy I recovered in a short time. I am much obliged to my dear brother for his punctual correspondence, and am not insensible how little I deserve the favour, but I know my profiting thereby is the only thing you regard. May I be enabled to give you that satisfaction.

I don't know any thing more profitable to my soul than the meditation of death; and indeed the account that you give me of Miss L——, occasioned many serious reflections. May I adopt
that

that last sentiment of hers in such a manner, as to render my latest moments more comfortable than was her's. "O! what is all this world to me." One might imagine it would be the exulting language of a soul, that had experienced the half of what the Lord has done for unworthy me. But O! my Brother, I feel an evil heart, yea, a body of sin thrusting fore at me; sometimes enticing me back into *Ægypt*, while at other times, I am filled with the unbelieving fears of not holding out to the end. But in the midst of all, I am cheered with the reviving hope, that Jesus will impart that faith which will admit me into the rest, which remaineth for the people of God, 'till when, by his grace I will trust in him who has delivered, and does deliver, that he will deliver.

You tell me you have lately been frequently exercised with sickness, I doubt not but that love is the intent of those visitations, and that by prayer and resignation, it will be much sanctified to you.

I trust the work of the Lord prospers where you are, and that the latter works of those dear servants of God, will be more abundantly successful than their former.

If I have zeal I need not be idle here, having many opportunities of acting for my Lord; but I have the greatest exercise at home, I mean, in my own heart, in which I trust I am (tho' but faintly) fighting the good fight of faith. Pray for me, my Brother, that I may be more than conqueror thro' my saviour's love. I hope the uneasiness my last gave you, is by this time quite dissipated.

sipated. I assure you my opinions are no ways hurt by the persons I therein mentioned. I wish my poor heart was as entirely cleansed from sin, as I trust my head is from errors. I was a little shock'd at hearing of Mrs. S——'s death, and wondered whether there was any change before the die was cast. To prepare for that moment, is the noblest employment of a reasonable being. May it be the constant business of my dear Brother, and his

Affectionate sister in the Lord,

M. L.



ANTIGUA, May 3, 1761.

DEAR BROTHER,

A FEW days ago I receiv'd yours of Feb. 14, by the packet, and not having heard from *England* of a long time, I had almost begun to fear that your silence proceeded from my seeming neglect in that particular; but be assured that nothing but some unavoidable hindrance will ever prevent me. I cannot express the gratitude I feel for the goodness of God to his church in general, and to those souls in particular, whom he has so lately removed from this vale of tears. I believe Mrs. W—— was a very sincere seeker, and am glad that her latter end was so triumphant; the thought that naturally occurs upon such occasions, is sweetly express'd in one of our funeral hymns,

“ O! when will the Saviour extend,

“ The arms of his mercy to me :

“ The days of my pilgrimage end,

“ My soul from its prison set free.”

IN

IN my last I inform'd you, that I had thoughts of returning to *England*; I have since mentioned it to Mr. G. who seems much averse to it. My desire and prayer is, that I may not be permitted to act contrary to the divine will of providence. Pray tell me with your usual freedom and candor, if you think I am in danger of so doing, and I trust I shall be open to conviction.

I doubt not but some good end will be answered in your being so constantly exercised with the same temptation: I will inform you of the advantage I have gained by your experience. Since I saw you, I have for more than a year been harrafs'd with a temptation equally sinful but more refined; and having found the same very predominant, when in a natural state, I began to think I had lost ground, and that I was becoming weak and sinful as before, not considering that in the former case, it gave me no trouble or concern at all, whereas now it was the continual grief and burthen of my soul. Upon reading your frequent complaints, I could not but discern a parity in the case; and being thoroughly persuaded that your's was only a trial and exercise of faith, I judged my own to be so likewise, and was encouraged thereby to press through the difficulty in all the confidence of hope: The snare is broke, and my soul in a great measure delivered. Forget not to plead for me at the mercy-seat, and be assured of the continual prayer of,

DEAR BROTHER,

Your affectionate sister in the Lord,

M. L.

ANTIGUA

ANTIGUA, Nov. 17, 1761.

DEAR BROTHER,

YOUR welcome letter by captain *Fowler* I received the 13th instant, it being a great while since I had the pleasure of hearing from you. I now take the opportunity by the packet to write, which I believe will be the last letter I shall send you from this place. I have wrote two or three since it has been in my mind to return to *England*, in which I have so often seem'd to resolve and unresolve, that I fear by this time you'll imagine me very wavering in my disposition, a fault I cannot much accuse myself of; for usually, when I have believed any thing right, and have once determined, I have seldom receded from it: Nor should I in the present case, had not every part of the family express an unwillingness at my leaving them; which, with a sense of the many obligations I was under to them, did once incline me to think of staying, but my resolution is now fixt, and nothing but some unforeseen interposition of divine providence will, I believe, prevent me. Yet I seldom indulge the pleasing thought of seeing my friends again, being always check'd with a remembrance of the uncertainty of life and it's occurrences; and besides, I bear in mind the dangers I must first pass through, so that I am now particularly labouring for a conformity to the divine will, that being the only stable prop of peace and happiness in a fluctuating world; and that I may attain this, I beg your prayers, as I do also for my preservation when I am upon the great and wide sea.

I

I was surpris'd to hear of Miss R——'s death, whom I saw a little before I left *England* so sprightly and so gay. Well may St. *James* say that "our life is as a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then passeth away."

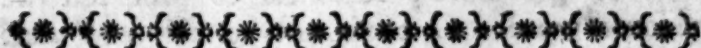
IN a season when the soul is enduring temptation, it may be profited by meditating upon the 20th verse of the 16th of St. *Paul's* epistles to the *Romans*, and the first epistle of St. *Peter*, v. 10. May the Lord sanctify them to you. I have also been much exercised, and have found it difficult to stand in a manner alone, but the Lord has dealt very graciously with his unworthy servant, and I have great cause to believe that in the end, they are advantageous to the soul. I have lately been very much blest, there has been a free and open intercourse betwixt God and my soul. I have been enabled to cast all my care upon him, firmly believing that he careth for me. I have discerned love in all his dealings and dispensations towards me, even from my youth up until now, and have in a manner not to be expressed, given up to his divine disposal all my concerns for time and eternity. Yet for a few days past, I have been brought into heaviness by a temptation, to which I have not been much accusom'd, and which I thought could scarcely have been suggested to so weak and unworthy a sinner. It has been spiritual pride, by which I see there is nothing unreasonable and strange, but what my heart is capable of. I think what you relate of my Brother's preservation, and your being so particularly drawn out in prayer for him, was a remarkable instance of the goodness of God.

MAY

MAY the Lord sanctify it to him, and remind him, that such signal mercies demand suitable returns. Pray give my sincere love to him, &c. as I do not intend writing to any of my friends again before I sail, perhaps it may be the last they will ever hear of me, the Lord's will be done. I ought to submit to him, who I am sure will order all things well. O! may we never chuse, he cannot err. I desire to be thankful for the lively hope to which he has begotten me, of seeing him without a veil, and of meeting those I love, where every tear shall be wiped away. Adieu my dear brother, and 'till you have good reason to believe I am no more, cease not to pray for

Your affectionate sister in the Lord,

M. L.



To Mr. F. R. LONDON, Sept. 20, 1762.

SIR,

YOURS of July 22, came to hand. I am much obliged to you for your kind remembrance of me, and desire of corresponding with me. You tell me, if I knew what you have undergone from the enemy of your soul, I should say you were a miracle of grace. Indeed my brother, I think we are all such, and I believe when the multitude that no man can number, are assembled round the throne to praise God and the lamb, for ever and ever; their favourite theme must and will be free, unbounded, all-sufficient grace. And in whatsoever degree this is bestowed on man, it will certainly be tried and proved to the utmost, tho' these trials afterwards yield the peaceable fruit of,
E righteoufness,

righteousness, and strengthen the confidence of those who are exercised thereby. The royal psalmist gained this advantage by the rage and malice of his spiritual enemies, that he was the more fully assured of the Lord's favour towards him, because he suffered them not to prevail over him. Tried, my brother, you (and all who set their faces *Sionward*;) will surely be, but foil'd you need not; for there is enough laid up in the covenant of divine grace to help in every time of need, and it is ours only for asking our Redeemer to bestow it. How inexpressibly tender hath been the Lord's dealings towards you in not suffering you to deceive yourself, or to speak peace to your soul before the sentence had gone forth from his throne. This is indeed matter of thanksgiving, and a sure token of the Lord's readiness to proclaim the welcome word. O cease not to call and wait upon him, 'till he has enriched you with all the blessings of the new covenant in Christ Jesus.

I hope your Mamma is well. May the Lord incline her heart also to close with the offers of his love, who freely invites and readily receives the favour'd race, for whom he bled and died. Pray give my respects to her, and to your brother, to whom I wrote soon after my arrival. My love likewise to Miss SALLY, who I hope is more and more serious. Poor Mrs. C—'s sudden death calls aloud to every survivor; be you also ready. Oh my brother, how diligent ought we to be in working out our salvation, and in making our calling and election sure! We should spend no moment unimproved, but part with all important time as misers do with their much lov'd gold. The work of God goes on prosperously
with

with us, and I am happy in the enjoyment of many valuable means of grace, but I am not without my trials and hindrances ; nor do I expect it 'till my race is ended, and I arrive beyond the reach of ill : And that we may finish our course with joy, and find an abundant admittance into those thrice happy realms, is the sincere and constant prayer of her who is,

Sir,

Your humble servant,

and sister in Christ,

M. L.



August 28, 1763.

DEAR BROTHER,

I readily embrace the opportunity (which Mr. B-'s kind offer of conveying my letter affords me) to enquire after your health and spiritual state, which I assure you will be always dear to me.

FOR my own part, I have abundant reason to praise our common friend, who gives me to enjoy at this time a good share of health, and so sweetly disposes all things in my present situation, that I can say I am exceedingly well satisfied ; and the more so, when I consider my great unworthiness, and that every station in life is accompanied with some unpleasantness, something to remind us that this is not our rest, that we are to look beyond the present scene for permanent bliss and unmixed joys. My chief concern

at present is to pursue the path, the narrow way that leads thereto. But however it may be with others, I find it no easy thing to continue in that track, even though the Lord has set my feet upon the rock, except he every moment condescend to order my goings.

Oh my dear brother! cease not to pray for me, as I trust I shall also for you and your's while life shall last: I can scarcely suppress the secret wish that it were not to be long. Oh inexpressible felicity! to be dissolved and to be for ever safe with the beloved of my soul, a privilege beyond all this perishing world can offer to my view! I desire to dwell continually upon his praise, who gives me in some measure to trample on it's goods and ills, nor suffers any thing in it much to excite my joy or grief. I regard myself as a traveller, passing through it, and desire with all my heart never to be attach'd to any thing in it. May he sweetly conduct us through, and at last crown his every mercy, by admitting us to an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom. This wish abates no more of it's ardency when offer'd up for my dear brother, than it does when it ascends for his

Affectionate sister in Christ,

M. L.



KENDAL, Feb. 9, 1765.

To Miss E. H.

I do not flatter my dear Miss H. in assuring her that we greatly miss her, are extremely anxious to

to hear of her health and safe journey, and shall be most sincerely glad to see her again when the errand of love which carried her to *Bristol* is completed. My dear friend and self have never forgot in our addresses to the throne either yourself, Mr. G. or dear Mrs. B. and I trust, as iron sharpeneth iron, so the Lord has blessed the meeting of her friends to her. I know not how soon I may most intimately sympathize with her, having received such an account from *London* of my poor Mamma, as leaves me little room to expect but that I shall very soon hear that she is no more. It seems to be the constant expectation of my eldest brother, at whose house she is at present in a most weak condition; but I have a comfortable hope, that her latter end will be peace. A consideration which, if the frailty of nature did not interpose, would alleviate (if not entirely suspend) the sorrows which poor mortals feel on such occasions. Oh the much to be lamented weakness and inconsistency of human nature! What! Grieve because the soul I love is for ever safe with Jesus, and having past the waves and storms of adverse life has happily attain'd the haven where I do and have long wished to be! What an amazing paradox, I say, is this! That I should mourn because blessings far exceeding my most clear ideas and sanguine wishes are bestow'd, and eternally insur'd to the person I sincerely love! Oh for a ray of heavenly wisdom to disperse this error, and remove every unreasonable and painful sensation! May the illuminating spirit of God lead into every divine truth conducive to present and everlasting bliss, my dear Miss H— and her affectionate humble servant,

M. L.

E 3.

KENDAL,

KENDAL, April 26, 1765.
To Mrs. C——d,

Dear MADAM,

AS every experience of the christian is mysterious to the world, and unintelligible to the natural man, so in particular is that spirit of love which upon the shortest acquaintance, unites them to each other. They can form no idea of the affection which subsists between members of the same head; those refined sensations among many other inconceivable privileges and blessings, are reserv'd only for those who are pass'd from death unto life, and who love God, because he has first loved them, and has revealed that chearing and important truth to their hearts. This sacred principle, (a measure of which divine grace has imparted, and maintains in my soul,) made me part with yourself and our other friends at *Liverpool*, with regret; and I should certainly agree with *Dr. Young* that, "Not to meet, or not to part, is peace," did not our mutual acquaintance increase our interest at the throne of mercy, where I trust to be remembered by you, and can assure you, I have not omitted that proof of my love. It is a blessing that we may be present there in spirit, tho' ever so distant in person; and that ere long, we shall meet where sin and all its consequents, as griefs, pains, and partings, are no more. It is not however improbable, but that we may have the pleasure of seeing you again; but I desire, as far as I know mine own heart, to refer the determination to the divine disposal.

Wa.

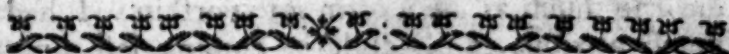
WE had a very fatiguing journey, and my friend has inform'd you of the accident we met with, and of the goodness of our God in preserving us; may gratitude overflow our hearts, and all our future lives be praise.

MANY thanks to you and Mr. C—d, and that you may increase in every grace, which can render you useful and happy, that the little flock may prove faithful unto death, and many be added to their number; and that they may at last inherit the kingdom of glory, is the sincere prayer and ardent desire of

Dear MADAM,

Yours affectionately in the best bonds,

M. L.



LONDON, *June 27, 1763,*

To the reverend Mr. J. W.

REV. SIR,

MY answers to your questions when you visited the class, I thought gave very little evidence of that work of grace I think the Lord hath lately wrought on my soul; for which reason I trouble you with this, by which you may judge whether it be genuine or not: But perhaps it may not be amiss to speak of the former work first, whereby you will see how God hath saved a sinner. From my infancy I was of an exceeding stubborn, self-will disposition, and strongly inclined to all wickedness; and having little restraint

refrain from those I was with, (my parents leaving me to the care of others) it grew up with me, so that before I was twenty, there was scarcely a sin I had not been guilty of. This continuing five years longer, it at last grew to such a height, that I had no conviction; for sins of uncleanness, and the money I got by cheating was the sweetest to me. Yet what is surprising, once at this time the Lord visited me with his love, sweetly constraining me to retire to prayer every day for a fortnight together, and to forego every sin and sinful companion. But using no other means of grace, and having none to speak to upon religion, I return'd to my sins as a dog to his vomit, and was worse than ever; so that for intolerable swearing I was reprov'd by my abandon'd companions. After I married I reformed outwardly a little, but did not turn to God, nor did I so much as use a form of worship. I had much anxious care, children coming fast, my wife's mother and my own mother living upon us, that we had a hard struggle to get a subsistence, especially in the year of the hard frost, and the year after.

Soon after my wife was seized with a consumption, and my mother hearing you was at dinner at Mr. H——'s sent you a letter, upon which you came and pray'd with her, and in a few days I buried her and two children. Her mother then leaving us, I had only my own mother, and a girl of my wife's by a former husband to maintain. Being now in a manner free, I got more money than my family's necessities required, and had a good name amongst men for sobriety and honesty. Now the Lord began to work, and as I was considering

sidering the trouble I had gone thro', I inadvertently took up J. TAYLOR's GOLDEN GROVE, wherein reading his exposition on the creed, I was convinced of unbelief. I threw myself on my knees, and for the first time I pray'd as a sinner. Afterwards I went to hear Mr. Douty of Clerkenwell, and thought him an excellent preacher, yet still I was not convinced of sin, and at this very time lived in the commission of my bosom sin; and for the sake of a thousand pounds was going to marry a wicked old woman; but a person at that time asking my mother to go and hear you, and my going with her, and having heard you three times, prevented it. At first I did not like your preaching, you talk'd so much of faith, of which I had no conception; but staying the meeting of the society, and your telling them, that they had almost forgot that the faith you preached was productive of good works, I thought you now spoke well. Soon after we were admitted into the society, and from that time I was enabled to forsake all sin, and sinful company, even the woman and man that were as my own soul. The word sinking into my heart whenever I heard it, discovered to me my inward sins, and the sinfulness of my past life, and so deprived me of rest, that I seldom slept a whole night, and made me to spend part of it in prayer and reading.

This continued from Nov. 1746, to the 15th of Feb. following, but the night before I was more than commonly heavy, yet I was not so when I rose in the morning, my burden being gone, and my heart as light as a bird, and my prayers having free access to the throne of God.

I found that I was no longer condemn'd, tho' I had not as yet the witness of the spirit that my sins were forgiven; nevertheless, I was not long kept in suspense, the Lord at the chapel pouring such a measure of love into my heart, that my body could hardly bear the weight thereof, and I became feeble as a child, and was obliged to sit or kneel most part of the service, and those words were strongly and constantly applied to my heart; "I am the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin."

Now was the name of Jesus sweet to my soul, and all the ways of God pleasant. Now I could believe, love, and obey, and it was my meat and drink so to do. My joy continued several weeks, tho' not every day alike; my evil nature soon making itself manifest, and in part, robbing me of the enjoyment of my God.

Now I began the good fight of faith, not indeed before I had on the armour, but before I knew how to use it; and I lay under the disadvantage of not having an experienced leader, that knew his own sins forgiven.

THEY of the society which came to see us, were rather for exalting, than bringing me down to the feet of Jesus. I had felt but very little of the wrath of God, or his displeasure at sin, in the time of legal repentance; (not feeling the terrors of hell for one hour) therefore being but little sensible of the sinfulness of sin, I did things for a time, that were contrary to the commandments of God; but the Lord bore with me, and convinced

convinced me of, and removed the evils, so that I soon learned to walk outwardly according to the gospel; nevertheless I continually found, and that more and more, that my inward parts were very wickedness, feeling pride and anger so strong within me, that very often I could not stand against the same; and thro' reasoning my faith being very weak, and not being acquainted with the devices of the enemy, he got an advantage over me.

FOR two years I was thus toss'd about, feeling evil desires very strong at the same time, and continually beset with doubts and fears. Then the Lord gave me to pray for grace to be kept one day only, and not to be careful for another, and from that time (except I had sinned) I have had no doubt of my acceptance, or abiding fear of falling. But still the root of bitterness made itself manifest, and often to the confusion of my face, and sometimes, I thought, to the reproach of the gospel. But the Lord was merciful, and forgave all my sins, and at times gave me to feel much of his love, together with a clear testimony of my acceptance, though my temptations and trials from the world were very great, and at one time from Satan, in a very uncommon manner, but that strong and constant sense I had of in-bred sin was worse than all: Indeed I had sometimes so piercing a sense of it, and so little hopes of enjoying the promises, that I have often wish'd for a dissolution of soul and body.

BUT though I felt this and more than can be express'd in words, and pray'd and strove to be delivered, that I might serve God in righteousness

ness and holiness without fear; yet did I seek it rather by the works of the law than by simple faith, believing that sin would die away by degrees, but not expecting a total release 'till near death. And thus I believe I had continued 'till this day, notwithstanding the plain scripture doctrine I sat under, if the Lord himself had not convinced me by the great work he lately carried on in the hearts of so many of my brethren. Yet neither at the beginning of that work could I believe that God gave the liberty they testified, but one and another who met with me in Class, and in whom I saw the work of grace carried on, gave evidence by word and deed, so that I could not but see and acknowledge the superior work of the spirit, in the holy, humble love, there was in some of them, for I could not receive the report of them all. Now was my soul distressed more than ever; nor was I without some envy at those who were so bless'd, and had hard thoughts of God because I had so long borne the burthen of in-bred sin, and some of them were not a year before they received an entire deliverance from it.

Now the purity of God, and the unholiness of my soul were more evident than ever, and I felt unbelief and hardness of heart such as I had never did before. But I could not pray with faith in the promises, and this was a great grief to me, for I thought if I could, I should be soon set at liberty. Yet there were a few minutes wherein the promises seemed to me to be Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, and that the Lord would fulfil them in my soul. Thus I continued hoping and desiring to love the Lord with all my heart, though at times I despaired that it
ever

ever would be. But on *Whitsunday, May 30, 1762*, the Lord did work in my soul in a manner I never before found. I was in some little expectation he would deliver me at this time, by taking possession of my heart in love, but that morning I found it hard to keep hope alive. Being at chapel in the beginning of the service, I found but little of his presence; yet at the singing the first hymn, the spirit came with such power as to take away all my attention to outward things. I then pleaded with the Lord, and with many tears, that he would make me a partaker of his sanctifying love, by removing for ever the root of bitterness out of my heart; when it was suggested to me, that I sought deliverance from inbred sin, only for the pleasure resulting therefrom.

THEN I strove to uncover the inmost recesses of my soul to the Lord, begging that he would look within me, that my heart being purified by faith, I might serve him with my whole soul, and have every thought brought into captivity to his obedience. While I was thus in earnest prayer, I felt such a sense of his presence and power, as made my body greatly tremble, yet I kept my spirit still, and continued crying, "my heart Lord, my heart Lord, work within, work within;" for I trembled fearing lest this visitation of the spirit should pass away, before my heart was purg'd from sin.

THE Lord heard my prayer, and answered me indeed, not by word but by work, as it was literally taking away the heart of stone, and giving me an heart of flesh. For I felt at that instant, my heart as it were with violence taken out

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of

of me, and love, such for its quality as I never felt before, taking possession of the empty place. I cried out in myself, Is it possible? Hast thou indeed purified my heart? Hast thou taken away the root of bitterness? scarce daring to give credit to the work of the spirit. I found love, and nothing contrary thereto all that day, but I had not the witness of the spirit with the word of God, which I could not be satisfied without. However the next day the Lord brought these words with power to my heart: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty thro' God, to the pulling down of strong holds, destroying, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

I was hereby given to know, that the hindrance to this being removed, the Lord would accomplish it in his time. This day I saw the works of creation as I never did before, beholding God in all things. In the evening seeing the setting sun, I could see by faith, and with a clear inward evidence, the purity of my soul in the son of God, and this was accompanied with an inexpressible sweet love. Notwithstanding all this, the enemy got an advantage over me on the third day, by reasoning, what will such or such an one think of me, if I should say, I believe the Lord hath purified my heart by faith. I was greatly afraid also, I should be constrained to speak the next Sunday as there was to be a love-feast, therefore by these and such like thoughts I grieved the spirit, and was brought into heaviness for three days, so that I was ready to give up all thoughts of any farther work of God within me, though I found no return of sinful nature, but Satan said it would

would not be long so, and I found it not easy to disbelieve him. But the next Sunday the Lord gave me a strong and clear evidence of the work of his grace, and I could not but declare it in the evening.

ALL the next week, I found the witness and the love of the spirit 'till Saturday, but that was a day of trial indeed, such as I have never found since; for from the time I rose 'till I went to bed, I was tempted to a dislike of persons and things. I wept much, not believing it could be from the enemy, but from mine own heart, and was determined to declare in the society I was deceived. However the Lord withstood that, by shewing me the next day at the chapel, that he had for ever removed pride, self-will, and evil desire out of my heart. I found now no unbelief, but my soul seemed ready to embrace every promise. From that time I have had no doubt that the Lord hath purified my heart; neither to this day, have I found any of those evils within me. Indeed I found myself more ignorant and weak than ever, having every thing to learn; but I had such a child-like dependence on Jesus Christ, and such sweet an union with him, that my soul rested on him as my wisdom and strength.

I have now lived one year in this blessed liberty, daily increasing in faith, and established in the truth of this inward salvation, and a great one it is. Now I find my soul is entered into the very nature of holiness, and I can love the Lord with a pure and holy love: Now I can also love mine enemies, and pray for them, as for mine own soul, and can bear injuries in that spirit which I

never could before. I neither feel sin nor fear it now; and that not from self security, but from a sense of inward liberty and watchful prayer, neither do I now ever find the least inclination to depart from the ways of God. Indeed he is become in such a manner the light and life of my soul, that my body could as well subsist without the soul, as my soul without Jesus. — When I have a particular love-visit from him, he sets as it were my heart in a flame, and not now as heretofore, the flame spreading about the heart, but entering into the very centre, the obstruction being now removed.

I have twice found eternity sweetly opened to my view, and once could see myself of that innumerable company, but with such astonishment as I cannot express, having at the same instance a glance of my past life. Yet I confess, great as this salvation is, it does not come up to the idea I had of it; for I not only thought I should see war no more, but that I should be, as soon as delivered from sin, filled with every grace of the spirit, and an uninterrupted enjoyment of God's pure love; having no conceptions that evil spirits, bodily infirmities, or any other power, could possibly interrupt that love for one minute. I also expected to have had meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, and an intense love to Jesus Christ, and the souls of men, to become as it were the very nature of the soul; but with me it is not so, for tho' I actually find more of these than ever, yet it seems as if they but just begin to exist, and I believe must be kept and increased by faith, and watching unto prayer.

INDEED.

INDEED, I find myself so defective in every grace, that I am ashamed before God and man. I also greatly feel the want of an humble mind, and beg it with all my heart; for however there be in reality a greater work of grace, yet I find myself more ignorant, empty, and helpless than ever, and my soul seems to want all things; but I may say in truth, I am possessed of all things in Christ Jesus. I might go on to speak of many wants and weaknesses, but I know you are not unacquainted with them.

G. C—.



LONDON.

To M. L. in ANTIGUA.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YOUR own kind heart can better conceive, than any words express the pleasing sensations mine experienced upon the receipt of your kind letter, a pleasure I have for some months waited for with impatience. I can truly say, I have not forgot you; no, not for one day since I saw you, and have often been led to think, that you had particularly ask'd of God to lay you upon my mind in prayer, being so exceedingly led out on your behalf, that it has often prov'd a blessing to mine own soul. I have longed to pour out my heart to you with mine usual freedom; and will indulge myself at this time, with giving you as clear and particular account as I can, of the dealings of God with my soul since we parted. Before I left *London* my spiritual vigour seem'd greatly to decline, my corrupt nature arose and

often prevailed, so that my confidence weakened, and every grace declined, tho' I retained a sincere desire to have it otherwise, and often in the anxiety of my heart said, "why am I thus?" But when I returned to *London*, and BETTY was taken from me, being more solitary and alone, and oftner communing with mine own spirit, it pleased God to shew me the cause of this decay, and that it proceeded from my having sought for sanctification as it were by the works of the law. He convinced me, that like the *Galatians*, I had begun in the spirit, and was in danger of ending in the flesh. He opened the scriptures to me in a clearer manner than ever, and shewed me that there really remained a rest for the people of God, and that those who have entered in have ceased from their own works; that it is attainable by faith alone, and instantaneously as justification. This I must attribute to the enlightening power of God; for though I had often heard it preached with power, yet I had no sort of conception of it 'till it was said to my soul, "the Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight." The application of this promise cleared mine apprehensions of it; since which I have conversed with some living witnesses of this great truth, who have every thought of their hearts brought into subjection to Christ by a sudden stroke of Omnipotence, and God is daily adding to the number.

SINCE this light has shone upon my mind, it has pleased God to lead me into a deeper sense of mine original depravity, and I have been for days together constrained to cry out, "Lord, I
am

“ am convined that man is far gone from that
 “ righteousness in which thou didst create him,
 “ for I feel the dire effects throughout my fallen
 “ soul.” At other times he has given me so to
 depend upon his faithful word and eternal truth,
 that I could say, “ Let heaven and earth pass
 “ away, yet not one jot nor tittle of his promises
 “ shall fail.”

THIS is the thing, my dear friend, for which
 restlessly resign'd I wait even to be a witness of,
 Jesus' power to save to the utmost, and to do his
 will on earth as it is done in heaven; which
 blessing I expect by free grace alone. I trust,
 my dear friend already experiences this valuable
 privilege, as I am sensible you have been far
 more faithful to the grace of God than myself.
 It is certain, we need not remain forty years in the
 wilderness, but with courageous *Joshua* and *Caleb*
 say, “ We are well able to possess the land, for
 “ it is God that fights for us.” If You are not yet
 so entirely blest, what shall a fellow-traveller say?
 but be not dismayed, look to Jesus every mo-
 ment, and he will speedily avenge thee of thine
 adversary, make an end of sin, and bring in
 everlasting righteousness: This I have learn'd
 from repeated experience, that we get nothing
 but darkness by looking to ourselves.

BETTY is making a swift progress, she gets
 the start of me, and God has bless'd her greatly
 of late. What more shall I say to my dear
 friend? that I desire to see your face? yea, I
 should often be importunate with the Lord for
 this, but that, “ Thy will be done,” silences
 each bold request; yet 'till God affords this
 pleasure.

pleasure, either in this vale, or in those celestial mansions where *Jonathan* his *David* meets, pray for and write frequently to me. *BETTY* joins me in sincere love to you, and we mutually pray, that blessings from above, both spiritual and temporal, may descend upon you: May the ardent wish be sealed in those sacred courts where, I trust, in due time, my dear friend will find an abundant compensation for all her griefs; 'till when, I hope to remain,

Your's unchangeably in the best bonds,

E. L.

LONDON, *May 17, 1763.*

To F. G. in ANTIGUA.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THE Lord I trust hath preserved you from the perils of the great deep, and given you to see and acknowledge his love, not only in bringing you safe to your desired port, but blessing you with that communion in holy love, which you never before experienced; making you a blessing also to those who sailed with you. I hope the light shines brighter to you on the promises of the gospel, giving you to see they are all for you; "Yea, and Amen, in Christ Jesus." Indeed it is impossible to be otherwise, seeing we are in Christ, and Christ in us, but we want faith to keep a continual lively sense of this in our own hearts; but he that asketh receiveth, and the Lord is faithful to his promise; let us not then dwell upon our weakness or short-coming,
but

but continue to spread our wants before him, who is touched with sympathy in all our afflictions and wants, and who was in all points tempted as we are, who is now our living head, and the light and life of our souls, therefore cannot possibly leave nor forsake us; let us then earnestly strive for faith, so as to be careful for nothing but to know, do, and suffer his will. Now I hope you are more than ever sensible the Lord does not send us a warfare at our own cost; but that now you proclaim a Saviour to others, who you know and feel, saves to the utmost those who come to God thro' him.

BUT now for myself. A few days after you left us, I had the greatest trial, yet the sweetest that I have felt, since I have been cleansed from sin. I never before experienced such a sweetness in the will of God taking place, and such a delight in submitting to bear the cross, such a lively faith, and child-like dependence on God my Saviour. Also on Sunday the 24th of *April*, the Lord gave me to drink largely of his love, manifesting the purity of my heart by faith in him, and giving me some little view of that eternal felicity he hath laid up for those who love him. Yet in general I feel my want of faith and love, meekness, patience, humility, and every grace of the spirit: But above all, I think I lament my unprofitableness, not being faithful to the grace the Lord gives me in the many opportunities I have to speak for him. I cannot express the thankfulness I find to the father for giving his son to die for me, feeling the need my soul has of his atonement, and of his presence and power to live in me, and subdue all things to himself.

I trust the Lord will give me always as hitherto, to remember you and your family, at the throne of grace, that you may be all immoveably fixt upon that rock of eternity Christ Jesus, and be partakers of his pure and holy nature. From

Your affectionate brother, and servant,

In our merciful Lord,

G. C.



LONDON, *Aug. 24, 1763.*

To the same.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I Received your's, and praise the Lord for his great goodness to you and your family, not doubting but he will continue his love to you, and make you a blessing to many thousands; so long as you keep your eye single, seeking his glory only in all your words and works. Blessed be Jesus Christ that has sent you to that people, and given you bodily health; but above all, for giving you increase of grace, freedom of speech, and an heart wholly given up to him in this good work. It may truly be said, because the Lord loveth you, therefore hath he called you to this most honourable of all employments, to be his mouth to the people, to declare the glad tidings of salvation, to publish the gospel of peace, to preach Jesus to the ears and hearts of many of those to whom he hath now sent you. But my brother will always remember, the servant is not above his Lord, therefore will have need of patience to bear contradiction both from good and bad

bad men, with your own infirmities, and sometimes with the dealings of the Lord to yourself and others. : But faith, all powerful faith will overcome all things. This will open the peaceable kingdom of Jesus within your breast, and fix it there for ever. Only get your heart purified by faith, then every vile affection, and every unruly passion shall be no more. Then the pure and holy love of Jesus shall fill your heart, and you shall enjoy that close union and fellowship with him your soul desires. But see that you give glory to God in believing his word, and that it shall be accomplished in those who simply adhere to Jesus Christ. Indeed, without that purifying work being wrought in the soul, it can hardly be, that we should get that true humility of heart needful for us, so as to become really nothing in our own eyes, and give to Jesus the glory of all his work, in us and by us. But our Lord will not leave you ignorant of his will, because of his own love, and for that you are not dependent on yourself, but on him, who giveth wisdom liberally to those who ask, and does not upbraid us with our past follies. As for myself, the Lord deals very graciously with me; spreading, I think, his kingdom of peace wider within me, and more than ever opening a little of the kingdom of glory to me; and giving me a lively taste of that true humility of heart, and that nothingness in myself, as that purity, light, and love the soul enjoys in him. Very lately he gave me to see into what light the soul would enter when it puts off these bodies; and this is consistent with those words, "God is light;" and again, "I am the light of life."

THESE

THESE I find are a great help to faith, opening to us the invisible things of God, and I thank him, they do not take me off, but fix me more on the sole merits of Christ. But I beg you will pray for me, that I may be truly humble, patient, and willing to do, or to be any thing the Lord would have me. My body is very weak, this nervous disorder gaining upon me so much, that if I now read three quarters of an hour, I am in pain all the day after, my eyes being so affected by it: But it is easy to bear the infirmities and weakness of the body, when the Lord gives faith and love to the soul.

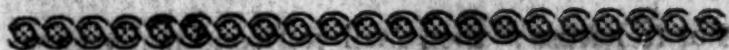
PRAY give my love to your brother, and tell him, I beg he will freely and fully offer himself to Jesus, who will not refuse him, but will surely wash him in his blood, and eternally unite him to himself by his own spirit. My love also to brother B — and your sister, and others among you that now believe, and bid them look into the word of God, and consider the love and power of Jesus, and plead the promises, putting away all reasonings, and simply continue in prayer, 'till the blood of Jesus hath purified their hearts: And may the God of peace and love strengthen, stablish, and settle you and your's in his everlasting love, so continues to pray,

Your affectionate brother,

G. C.



To



To the same.

LONDON, Nov. 21, 1763.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I Am sorry you have not received my letter. I have indeed wrote two, but the latter could not have come to you so soon as you wrote your last. My first was delivered the latter end of *April*, the last in *Aug.* and both left at LLOYD'S COFFEE-HOUSE according to your directions; for my love to you is not in word only, scarcely forgetting you one day when I make supplication to the Lord, that you may experience all the light, love, and salvation the Lord has promised to give, and that he may prosper the work to which he has called you, making you also a blessing to your family. It gave me great comfort to hear the Lord has so prepared your way, and gave you freedom of spirit, and a people to whom you could declare the glad tidings of salvation, not doubting but the Lord will carry on a work in that place; but as I said in my former, you must have patience, not only with the people, yourself, and family, but with the Lord also, for he perhaps, may not carry on the work so swiftly as you may desire. I trust you are brought sweetly to resign your will to his, in all the work of grace within and without, having it always in your heart to seek his glory in all your thoughts, words, and works. O my dear brother, pray earnestly that every thing within, which hinders that holy, pure, and perfect will, may be removed, that you may prove all his commands to be good and acceptable to the soul, whether it is pleasing or

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not

not to nature; then shall you continually experience the force of the words you have so often heard in that blessed benediction, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your heart and mind, in the knowledge and love of God, and of his son Jesus Christ." I the rather speak of this, because of the peculiar blessing those words have lately been to me, finding such a fulness in them, my soul never felt before. Blessed be Jesus Christ, who still keeps my soul in peace, giving me the constant witness and inward evidence that sinful nature is entirely removed. At particular times I have a more lively sense of that pure and holy union there is between my soul and Jesus, finding a strong desire to be with him, in order to keep me from all self-complacency: He gives me to feel what an ignorant, empty, helpless, and worthless creature I am. Indeed I may be said of late, to possess mine own nothingness. And tho' I am strongly convinced that I am an unprofitable servant, yet this conviction has no tendency to disunite my soul from Jesus; but rather the contrary, feeling the need I have of him, as my Saviour, friend, and advocate, to plead the merits of his death, and to take away the iniquity of my holy things, as well as those things in which I come short of fulfilling the holy and perfect law of God, which I find indeed to be sin, but the blood of Jesus is ever apply'd to remove it, so that the soul contracts no guilt.

I bless the Lord also for his mercies to my wife, she continuing still in that holy love and union with Christ our Lord, so that our lives are not only comfortable, but really happy. And that the

the Lord God our Saviour, may increase your faith, love, and zeal for his glory, is the earnest prayer of many of your friends here, but perhaps of none more than,

Your sincere friend and brother,

G. C.



LONDON, *Aug.* 13, 1765.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I Am glad to hear you are settled to your liking, and I pray God to fix his love in each of your hearts, then shall you be no more unstable; but you know his kingdom suffers violence, and chiefly that of nature; for we must deny ourselves, take up the cross of private prayer, diligently search our hearts, to see and find out the pride, self-will, self-love, and self-pleasing, that are there; and when and how they work, and be very free and open in our confession of them, and all other things we find contrary to the purity of God. At the same time be guarded against unbelief, because he that hath given us his son, has promised with him freely to give us all things: Remember this, and be not slow of heart to believe. Call to remembrance the work the Lord hath already wrought; for it is good sometimes to look back, and see how graciously the Lord has dealt with us, and this is a help to faith, faith in the promises not yet fulfilled in us. Are we now the children of God? Are we now one spirit with the Lord, and our bodies temples of the holy Ghost? What then can our father deny us? Not grace, holiness, nor heaven, for he

has called us to the enjoyments of them all. They are right before us, we can't miss of them, if we follow the captain of our salvation. He that followeth him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have knowledge in, and power to do his will. But there is a necessity of much prayer, for wisdom and strength, because we are very ignorant and weak, but the Lord I trust will give you understanding in all things, and strengthen you to fulfil all his will. I hope I shall continue still to pray for you and your's; and shall also be glad to hear from you whenever it is convenient.

I am, your affectionate brother,

G. C.



CHESTER, Nov. 15, 1765.

To the reverend Mr. J. W.

REVEREND SIR,

THE extensive usefulness of your valuable life, renders its continuance with the addition of health, a circumstance of such importance to the church, that it must be the continual prayer, and earnest wish of all that are so happy, as to have been brought under the joyful sound of your ministry.

PERMIT me, Rev. Sir, who am the least, and perhaps the most unfaithful that ever enjoyed so high a privilege, to assure you, that my heart is truly interested herein, that my prayers are daily offered to the throne of mercy on this behalf, and that with great solicitude and sincerity, and because

cause I believe there subsists a mutual, tho' inexplicable sympathy and affection between a spiritual father, and the children that are given him by the Lord. I take the liberty of intruding myself upon your memory, to give you some account of my state, and to intreat a continuance of your prayers. I hope I may with humility, and just abasement of myself before God, inform you that his work has for some months been reviving in my soul, and that my heart is indeed a-thirst for that holiness, without which I am convinced, I cannot either fully enjoy God in this life, or dwell in his beatific presence in eternity. Sometimes I have been permitted to such sweet communion and near access, and so enabled to plead the promises, that I have well nigh imagined, that I was just entering into the good land: But to my grief and surprize, I have also found my corruption more lively and powerful than ordinary. The grand adversary has thrust sore at me, and my soul has endured severe conflicts; yet I still believe it is for good, and am willing to conclude, the rage of Satan is a token that his power is of short duration, and that ere long the captain of my salvation will bruise him under my feet; though he would often persuade me that he shall prevail, and that I shall never wholly be delivered from his yoke: At such seasons I go on heavily, but soon the Lord breaks the force of this suggestion, by lifting up the light of his countenance, and then I urge my way with strength renew'd. O how sweet will the rest of perfect love appear to my weary longing soul! Help me, dear Sir, by your prayers, to seize the inestimable prize.

THE Lord is graciously pleas'd to bless me in the little labour of love which his providence and your appointment has engag'd me in. The souls of these seem to prosper: One among them has received a clear manifestation of pardoning love, and some are seeking this goodly pearl with great earnestness, and those that have believed through grace are in a measure pressing forward. May this and every part of the vineyard which has been bless'd with your ministry, and nourish'd by your care, be your comfort and crown of rejoicing in that happy day, when labour shall be exchanged for uninterrupted repose, the cross for the victorious palm, and an admittance into the joy of our Lord reward all your toil, and end the dubious strife of,

REV. SIR,

Your affectionate daughter in the gospel,

M. L.



BATH, Oct. 30, 1765.

To those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in or about
M____, _____, _____, _____, *Peace be multi-*
plied to you from God the Father, and from our
Lord Jesus Christ, through the operation of the
Holy Ghost, Amen.

BY the help of divine Providence, and the assistance of your prayers, I came safe hither last Saturday se'nnight. I was, and am still a good deal weigh'd down under the sense of mine insufficiency to preach the unspeakable riches of Christ to poor dying souls. This place is the
seat

seat of Satan's gaudy throne: The Lord hath nevertheless a few names here, that are not ashamed of him, and of whom he is not ashamed, both among the poor and among the rich. There are not *many* of the last, though blessed be God for *any* one! 'Tis a great miracle if one camel passes through the eye of a needle; or, in other words, if one rich person enters into the kingdom of God. I thank God that none of you are rich in the things of this world, you are freed from a dreadful snare, even from *Dives's* portion in this world. May you know the happiness attending your state! It is a mercy to be drove to the throne of grace even by bodily want, and to live in dependence on divine mercy even for a morsel of bread.

I have been sowing the seed that the Lord hath given both in *Bath* and *Bristol*, and I hope your prayers have not been lost upon me as a minister; for though I have not been able to discharge my office as I would, the Lord hath in some measure stood by me, and over-rul'd my foolishness and helplessness. I am much supported by the thought that you bear me upon your hearts, and that when you come to the throne of grace to beg a blessing for me in the name of Jesus, the Lord doth in no wise cast you out. With regard to the state of my soul, I find, blessed be God, that as my day is, so is my strength to travel on, without minding much either good or bad report.

My absence from you answers two good ends in regard of me: I feel more my insufficiency, and the need of being daily ordained of
Christ

Christ to preach his gospel; and I shall value the more the worth of my privilege with you, please God I return safely to you. I had yesterday a most advantageous offer made of going free cost to my own country, (i. e. *France*,) to see my mother, brothers, and sisters in the flesh, whom I have not seen for near eighteen years, but I find my relations in the spirit are nearer and dearer to me than my relations in the flesh; I have therefore refused the kind offer, that I might return among you, and be comforted by the mutual faith of you and me.

I hope, my dear brethren, that you improve much under the ministry of that faithful servant of God Mr. B——, whom Providence blesses you with; make haste to gather the honey of knowledge and grace as it drops from his lips, and may I find the hive of your heart so full of it at my return, that I may share with you in the heavenly store. In order to this, intreat the Lord to stir up your hunger and thirst after Jesus' flesh and blood, and to increase your desire for the sincere milk of the word. When people are hungry they will find time to go to their meals; and a good appetite doth not think that a meal a day is too much: As you go to spiritual meals forget not to pray all the way, and to feast your souls in hopes of hearing some good news from heaven, and from Jesus, the faithful loving friend which you have there; and when you return home, be sure to carry the unsearchable riches of Jesus' dying and rising love to your houses, in the vessel of a believing heart; let light be attended with warmth of love. Be not you satisfied in knowing the way to heaven, but walk in it immediately, constantly,

constantly, and joyfully; be all thoroughly in earnest. You may impose upon your brethren by a formal attendance on the means of grace, but you cannot deceive the searcher of hearts. Let him then see your hearts struggling towards him, and if you fall through heaviness, sloth, or unbelief, do not you make a bad matter worse by continuing hopeless in the ditch of sin and guilt. Up and away to the fountain of Jesus' blood, it will not only wash away the guilt of past sins, but strengthen you to trample all iniquity under foot for the time to come. Never forget that the soul of the diligent shall be made fat, and that the Lord will spue the luke-warm out of his mouth. Get therefore that love which makes you diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

You know the way to get this love is, 1st. to consider the mercy of God; 2dly, be frequently if not continually plying this faith with all the attention of your minds, and fervour of your hearts, "Lord, I am lost, but Christ hath died!" 3dly, to try actually to love as you can, by setting your affections on Christ whom you see not, and for his sake, on your brethren whom you see; 4thly, to use much private prayer for yourselves and others, and to try to keep up communion with God, and with your absent brethren.

I beg, in order to this, that you will not neglect the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is; and when you meet in Society, be neither backward nor forward to speak; esteem yourselves every one the meanest in the company, be glad to sit at the feet of the lowest

if you are tempted against any one, yield not to the temptation, and pray for much of that love which hopeth all things, and puts the best constructions even upon the worse of things. I beg for Christ's sake I may find no division and no offence among you at my return. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of mercy, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself. I earnestly beg the continuance of your prayers for me, both as a minister, and as your companion in tribulation; as in particular, that the Lord would keep me from hurting his cause in these parts, and that when Providence shall bring me back among you, which I hope will be this day fortnight, I may be thoroughly furnished for every good word and work. That the blessing of God in Christ Jesus, may crown all your hearts and your meetings, is the earnest prayer of, my very dear brethren,

Your unworthy servant in the gospel
of our common Lord,

J. R.

P. S. I had not time to finish this letter yesterday, being call'd upon to preach in a market-town in the neighbourhood. The dragon shew'd some of his spite and venom to little purpose. A gentleman churchwarden would hinder me getting into the pulpit; and in order to this, curs'd and swore, and took another gentleman by the collar in the middle of the church. Notwithstanding

standing his rage, I preached; may the Lord raise in power, what was sown in weakness.



OAKHALL, SUSSEX, Sept. 23, 1766.

To those who love or fear the Lord Jesus at M—, —, —, grace, peace, and love, be multiplied unto you, from our God and Saviour Jesus Christ!

PROVIDENCE, my dear brethren, called me so suddenly from among you, that I had not time to take my leave of you, and recommend myself to your prayers; but I hope the good spirit of our God, which is a spirit of love and supplication, hath brought me to your remembrance, as the poorest and weakest of Christ's ministers, and consequently as him whose hands stand most in need of being strengthened and lifted up by your prayers. Pray on then for yourselves, for one another, and for him whose glory is to minister unto you in spiritual things, and whose sorrow it is not to do it in a manner more suitable to the majesty of the gospel, and more profitable to your souls. My heart is with you nevertheless. I bear patiently this bodily separation for three reasons.

I. THE variety of more faithful and abler ministers which you have during my absence, is more likely to be serviceable to you than my presence among you; and I would always prefer your profit to my satisfaction.

II. I hope providence will give me those opportunities of conversing and praying with a greater

greater variety of experienced christians, which will tend to mine own improvement, and I trust in the end, to yours.

III. I flatter myself, that after some weeks absence, my ministry will be recommended by the advantage of novelty, which (the more the pity) goes farther with some than the word itself. In the mean time, I shall give you some advice, which it may be, will prove both suitable and serviceable to you.

1. ENDEAVOUR to improve daily under the ministry that Providence blesses you with: Be careful to attend it with diligence, faith, and prayer. Would it not be a great shame, if when ministers come thirty or forty miles off to offer you peace and pardon, strength and comfort, in the name of God, any of you should slight the glorious message, or hear it as if it was nothing to you, and as if you heard it not? See then, that you never come from a sermon, without being more deeply convinced of sin and righteousness: In order to this,

2. USE much prayer before you go to church: Consider that your next appearance there, may be in a coffin; and intreat the Lord to give you now so to hunger and thirst after righteousness, that you may be filled therewith. Hungry people never go fasting from a feast. Call to mind the text I preached from the last Sunday but one, before I left you. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisy, and envies, and all evil-speaking; as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby, 1. Pet. 2. 1."

3. WHEN

3. WHEN you are under the word, beware of sitting as judges, and not like criminals; many judge of the manner, matter, voice, or person of the preacher; you perhaps judge all the congregation, when they should judge themselves guilty of eternal death, and yet worthy of eternal life, thro' the worthiness of him, who stood and was condemned at *Pilate's* bar for them. The moment you have done crying to God as guilty, or thanking Christ as reprieved criminals, you have reason to conclude, that this advice is levelled at you.

4. WHEN you have been at a means of grace, and do not find yourselves sensibly quicken'd, let it be matter of deep humiliation to you. For want of repenting of their unbelief and hardness of heart, some get into a habit of deadness and indolence, so that they come to be as insensible, and as little ashamed of themselves for it, as stones.

5. BEWARE of the inconsistent behaviour of those, who complain that they are full of wandering in the evening under the word, when they have suffered their minds to wander from Christ all the day long. O! get acquainted with him, that you may walk in him, and with him. Whatsoever you do or say, especially in the things of God, do or say it, as if Christ was before, behind, and on each side of you. Indeed he is so, whether you consider it or not; for when he visibly appeared on earth, he called himself the son of man which is in heaven; how much more then is he present on earth, now, that he makes his immediate appearance in heaven. Make
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conscience then, to maintain a sense of his blessed presence all the day long, and all the day long you will have a continual feast; for can you conceive any thing more delightful, than to be always at the fountain of love, peace, beauty, and joy; at the spring of power, wisdom, goodness and truth? Can there be a purer, and more melting happiness, than to be with the best of fathers, the kindest of brothers, the most generous of benefactors, and the tenderest of husbands? Now Jesus is all this, and much more to the believing soul. O! believe my friends, believe in Jesus now, thro' a continual now, and until you find you can thus believe; mourn over your unbelieving heart, drag it to him as you can; think of the efficacy of his bloodshed for the ungodly, and wait for the spirit of faith from on high.

6. SOME of you wonder why you can't believe; why you cannot see Jesus with the eye of your mind, and delight in him with the affections of your heart. I apprehend the reason to be one of these, or perhaps altogether.

I. You are not poor, lost, undone, helpless, despairing sinners in yourselves. You indulge spiritual and refined self-righteousness; you are not yet dead to the law, and quite slain by the commandment. Now the kingdom of heaven belongs to none but the poor in spirit; Jesus came to save none but the lost. What wonder then, if Jesus is little to you, and if you do not live in his kingdom of peace, righteousness, and joy in the holy ghost?

II. PERHAPS you spend your time in curious reasonings, instead of casting yourselves as forlorn

lorn sinners at Christ's feet, leaving it to him to bless you, when, and in the manner and degree he pleases. Know that he is the wise and sovereign God, and that it is your duty to lie before him as clay, as fools, as sinful nothings.

III. PERHAPS also, some of you wilfully keep idols of one kind or other: You indulge some sin against light and knowledge, and it is neither matter of humiliation nor confession to you. The love of praise, that of the world, that of money, and that of sensual gratifications, when not lamented, are as implacable enemies to Christ, as *Judas* and *Herod*. How can ye believe, seeing ye seek the honour that cometh from men? Hew then your *Agags* in pieces before the Lord; run from your *Delilahs* to Jesus resolutely; cut off the right hand and, pluck out the right eye that offend you: "Come from among them, and be separate," saith the Lord, and I will receive you." Nevertheless, when you strive, take care not to make yourself a righteousness of your striving; remember that justifying righteousness is finished and brought in, and that your goodness can no more add to it than your sins diminish it. Shout then, "The Lord your righteousness;" and if you are undone sinners, humbly and yet boldly say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

7. WHEN I was in *London*, I endeavour'd to make the best of my time; that is to say, to hear, receive, and practise the word. Accordingly, I went to Mr. WHITFIELD's Tabernacle, and heard him give his Society a most sweet exhortation upon love. He began by observing

that when the apostle St. *John* was old, and past walking and preaching, he would not forsake the assembling himself with the brethren, as the manner of two many is upon little or no pretences at all; on the contrary, he got himself carried to their meeting, and, with his last thread of voice, preached to them his final sermon made up of this one sentence, "My little children, love one another." I wish, I pray, I earnestly beseech you to follow that evangelical, apostolical advice; and 'till God makes you all little children, little in your own eyes, and simple as little children; give me leave to say, my dear brethren, love one another, and of course, judge not, provoke not, be not thy of one another, but bear ye one another's burthens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; yea, bear with one another's infirmities, and do not easily cast off any one, not for sin, except it be obstinately persisted in.

My sheet is full, and so is my heart of good wishes for, and strong longings after you all. I have just room to tell you, I hope to be with you in three or four weeks time. O let me have the comfort of finding you all believing and loving. Farewel, my dear brethren: The blessing of God be with you all; this is the earnest desire of,

Your unworthy minister,

J. F.



To



To Miss H—.

YOU seem not to have a clear idea of the happiness of the love of Jesus, or at least of your privilege of loving him again: Your dullness of private prayer arises from the want of a familiar friendship with Jesus; to obviate which, go to your closet, as if you was going to meet the dearest friend you ever had; cast yourself immediately at his feet, bemoan your coldness before him, extol his love to you, and let your heart break with a desire to love him 'till it can actually melt with his love; be importunate, and get your Lord to avenge you of your adversary, I mean your cold heart.

You ask some directions to get a mortified spirit; in order to get it, get recollected. Recollection is a dwelling with one's self, and being abstracted from creatures towards God: It is outward and inward: Outward recollection consists, first, in silence, which cuts off superfluous words, speaks of necessity, and that for the glory of God: secondly, in solitude, or a being wisely disentangled from the world, a keeping quietly to one's business, or a shutting the door of one's senses; in an inward deep attention to Jesus' love, and in a continual care of entertaining holy thoughts, for fear of spiritual idleness. Through the power of the spirit, let recollection be steady even in the midst of hurrying business. Secondly, Let it be calm and peaceable. Thirdly, Let it be lasting: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation." In order to

this, beware of engaging too deep and beyond necessity into outward things, of being captivated or entangled in heart by any troublesome worldly desire or affection; of wilfully committing small faults. Recollection appears vastly necessary; because for want of it, prayer is useless, imagination and wanderings prevail, the heart gets loose and roves every where; whereas we pass easily from recollection to delightful prayer again. Without recollection, we cannot find out nor crush sin in it's first risings; therefore it will break out in every unmortified person. To this I might add, that without recollection, we cannot know or deny ourselves to any purpose. In recollection, let your mind act according to grace, it will probably lead you, either to contemplate on Jesus crucified, dying, rising, interceding. Fourthly, Watch your senses, suppress your passions. Fifthly, Keep before God in respectful silence of heart. Sixthly, Watch and follow the motions of grace, and feed on the promises.

BUT take care here, 1st. To be more taken with thoughts of God, than yourself. 2dly, To consider, how hardly recollection is got some times, and how easily lost. 3dly, Not to use much forc'd labour to raise a particular frame. 4thly, Not to fret, tire, nor grow impatient, if you have no comfort; but meekly to acquiesce and confess yourself unworthy of any, determining quietly to wait for the smiles of Jesus. The following motives may stir you up to the pursuit of recollection: 1st. We must forsake all, and die to all first by recollection; 2dly, without which, God's voice can't be heard in the soul. 3dly, It

3dly, It is the only altar on which to offer our *Isaacs*. 4thly, It is instrumentally a ladder (if I may so speak) to ascend into God. 5thly, It is the rendezvous of God and the soul. 6thly, By it, the soul gets to it's centre; out of it, it is restless. 7thly, Man's soul is the temple of God: Recollection, the holy of holies. 8thly, As the wicked by recollection find hell in their breasts, so faithful souls heaven. 9thly, Without it, all means of grace prove useless, or make but a slight impression. 10thly, Recollection empties the soul that God may fill it.

I give you these hints, not to set Christ aside, but that you may, according to the light and power given, take the stone and place it upon the chief corner stone: Cement them with the blood of Jesus, 'till the superstructure in some measure answers the excellency of the foundation.

J. F.

English Harbour, in ANTIGUA.

To N. G. Esq;

DEAR SIR,

THE only exercise I can use at present for the sake of health, is to take a row in my boat without the harbour's mouth. After an excursion of this nature, I was favour'd with your letter, and dinner being just brought upon the table, I was obliged to detain your boy. The illness you complain of, were it the will of God to remove, I should rejoice for many reasons, not wholly divested of self: But as thro' the divine light,

light, I perceive the hand of mercy in every affliction; I cannot force myself to say, that I am sorry for your disorder. Sicknes, my dear fellow-traveller, will carry us on our journey to the arms of Christ, perhaps with less stumbling in our course than health. It has pleased the Lord to visit me a long time past, speaking after the manner of the natural man, with a pain in my bowels, and afterwards with biles, which have now deprived me of the exercise of riding even a mile. I was obliged to be scarified two days ago, which at present prevents my waiting upon you. My time also, whilst I am on the island, will be much employed in settling my public as well as private affairs. Mr. P——'s arrival [*this is the name of the admiral who was to relieve the author on that station,*] will give me a little more certainty in regard to time. If it is possible for me, I will wait upon you before I sail. I trust in God that peace is just at your door, listen to the knocks, open and give him admittance. Depend upon it, self must be turned out. There must be no rival. Pray to the father of light, to expel the secret lurker that has cast a veil over your spiritual eyes, and keeps you so long from peace. If I dare presume to speak what I think is suggested to me by a good being, and if my own spirit doth not deceive me, by thy sufferings, thou must be a chosen servant of God for some extraordinary purposes. Hasten then, search thy heart and die to self, that thou mayest the sooner enter into peace, which I pray the Lord speedily to grant thee, thou afflicted one. From the centre of my soul, do I wish thee and thine that peace which passeth all understanding. How shall I describe the goodness of God towards wretched me, unworthy

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thy of the least of his mercies. Would you think it? Being in promiscuous company lately, I unhappily let my tongue utter things that have cost me much sorrow, but the Lord has forgiven me, I have washed myself in the blood of the lamb. Such loving kindness and tender mercies have I experienced, that I do not know what to say or what to do, but humble myself more and more in the dust. I am confounded and astonished, that such a wretch is so highly favoured. I hope the Lord will sanctify me, before I deposit my carcase in it's original dust.

You mention too higher stages of christianity that I have not attained. Alas! my friend, by the high cordials that are given to me to raise up the spiritual life, and keep it from languishing, I feel that I am a very weak babe in Christ; but renouncing myself to the direction of infinite wisdom, power and love, to be dealt with as seems proper to the holy deity, I seem to pass thro' my pilgrimage with greater peace than heretofore. I shall be obliged to go to sea in a leaky ship, but the Lord is my guide, thro' life or thro' death, his will be done. If it was well pleasing to my Lord, I would rather be dissolved and go to Christ, than remain in this perilous world. I will wait upon you before I sail if I can sit in a chaise. My compliments to your lady, and accept the same from,

Your obedient servant, and
affectionate brother,

R. T.

St. KITTs,



ST. KITTS, *June 5, 1766.*

TH^O I am truly ambitious of my dear friend's tenderest affection, yet I most sincerely hope, that I have felt the severest pang on the late trying occasion. O my dear, I am too often forc'd to ask my soul, where alas! where is all that fortitude with which christianity fills the breast, and why this fainting in the trying hour! Shall I impute it to the greatness of the cause, or the weakness of my faith? I believe it may be justly alledged to both. However, I think the duties I am called to, are to hope, to strive and to pray, that it may be sanctified to the furtherance of the work of grace in my soul; for this is certainly the will of God in all his providential dispensations towards us. I would apologize to my dear sister for my not coming up stairs again on hearing the boat was not ready, but that I believe she too well felt the reason. One such a farewell as I then took, was too much for unassisted nature to sustain; and what must a second have cost me? tho' indeed it was one of the greatest pieces of self-denial I have almost ever used, to be in the same house with such a friend, and not enjoy her company, and when about to take so long an adieu. O, my dear! so far from absence making any abatement in my affections, I think I may affirm, that it will daily increase.

I am very well satisfied in coming in the vessel with Mrs. L—; and as for poor Mrs. D—, she and I were the fittest companions that could be last night; for we both slept in one state room,
and

and when I went to bed, she talked to me of her son, with whom she had parted, and wept much; at the same time I was deeply bemoaning my absent friends, but particularly my bosom friend, my dear sister G——, whom I am not able to think of without tears, and many a stop have they occasioned in these few lines. O may my dearest friend's repose be this and every night sweet and salutary; may she rest in the arms of the ever present God of love. If it be his will concerning us, may we meet again on earth, to share each other's griefs and joys, to enjoy each other's company, and to be the happy instruments of eternal good to each other's souls! But if this much-to-be-desired lot should ne'er be our's, O! may we both sleep in God's appointed time in the dear Lord Jesus, and in the morning of the resurrection, awake all bright and glorious, like our Head, never to hear of parting more! so prays,

Your (I trust) unalterable, and
most affectionate sister and friend
in the best bonds,

M. L.



LONDON, Dec. 6, 1766.

To F. G.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I CONFESS it seemed strange to me, that you should cease to write when you had no farther use for me in temporal things, yet did not my soul forget you or your's before the Lord. I might

might say (with a good man I have read of) that if every chair in my room could speak, they could bear witness, that I have not omitted to make mention of you and your's by name, any day since you left *London*. And thanks be to him who has commanded us to love one another, and will accept our imperfect petitions.

My soul does continually praise God for Jesus Christ, and for the salvation that is by faith in him; feeling, I think, more than ever, the need my soul has of him, as my wisdom and strength. But indeed he is continually my light and life; without whom, I do not now endeavour to think or act, and never do I look for, or desire that my soul may be in this or that frame, only that I might see the way he leads me, and follow him without reluctance. He has lately dealt very graciously with me, shewing me what it is to put on Christ, or to be a partaker of the divine nature, which to me appeared infinitely above all I had hitherto received. This also I find, must be received by faith; for I feel myself as incapable as ever, to do any thing to merit the least favour of God. But blessed be the Lord that hath removed that unbelief, my heart felt the burden of for many years; now every promise is to me, "Yea, and Amen in Christ Jesus," and well it is for my soul, that it is thus established on his faithful word; for tho' it is a truth, that the Lord has taken away the root of sin, and that I find constantly the witness of the spirit, as well as a constant tranquillity of mind, yet do I find many weaknesses, and greatly fall short of perfect obedience. My soul cries out for love, and hungers and thirsts to dwell in love, and thus to be united to him

him, who is my all in all. O my brother, follow after love, and be not discouraged at any thing you feel contrary thereto. Remember Jesus is Jehovah, trust him with your soul, offer it up to him, in whatever state it is. Seek not for this or that frame; pray only for an increase of faith, for this is the present subsistence of all we can hope for, and it is more pleasing to God than all we can do or suffer tho' it be with a view to please him. Perhaps you have not yet consider'd the importance of faith. I know both nature and the devil will press the soul, to look at this or that within us to be remov'd, or this or that disposition acquired, before we can enjoy the love of God. This you will be more acquainted with, if you set yourself to pray for faith alone, and are determined to continue, 'till the Lord shines upon your soul in a manner he has not yet done. And there need be no fear, that while you are doing this, some corruption will prevail, or that you shall be surpris'd into sin; tho' I believe, the powers of hell will endeavour by all means, to disorder the soul, and cause it to give up it's hope; but by this exercise, we more immediately commit ourselves into the hands of Jesus, who will never fail us, but secretly encourage the soul to press forward, by making the promises more evident to our view. If I did not know the weakness of man, and the devices of Satan, as I have for some years past, I should not think of thus writing to you, whom God has made a teacher of others; but if it should not be needful, you will I know, forgive my freedom. The blessedness I find in believing the word of God, and resting on his faithfulness, I cannot enough recommend to you and others; for to me, he is a tried cor-

ner stone, the rock of salvation, saving me from care, fear and desire, tho' I never felt more weakness in soul or body, and my circumstance in life, would be a continual exercise of pain, but the Lord keepeth me, my treasure is in heaven, and my heart pursueth it. The Lord grant that you and your's, may fix your stedfast eye on the crucified son of God, and from him receive light in his word, and the work of his grace, so that your souls may be established in love and purity.

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

G. C.



MY DEAR SISTER,

YOU may perhaps be a little surprised at a letter from me, but nothing has induced me to write, but the hope of being somewhat spiritually useful to you, and I must beg of you to receive it with candour.

THE Lord still continues his loving kindnesses and mercies to me; so that I have a constant sense of the truths of eternity, and know that Jesus is Jehovah, that he searches the hearts, and knows the secrets of every soul; that he shall judge us at the last day, and I find that his gospel is the power of God unto salvation. This induces me to pray for you, for I know you have had some lively impressions of the truth; and I hope they are not quite erased from your mind. But is there not great need to regard our Lord's words, to strengthen the things that remain, and
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are ready to die, inasmuch as he has told us, that his spirit shall not always strive with man, that except we are born again, we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, and has asked us, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Let me intreat you then to enter into yourself, and see what you have benefited by all the pleasures of life. Have not years and experience taught you, that happiness is not to be obtained by any thing under the sun? that there is little else but weariness, pain, and sorrow here? But the children of God, who follow his guidance in spite of all, possess righteousness, peace, and joy, in being united to Jesus, and have eternal life in and thro' him: and will not you seek after this bliss? You know the way; the cross you must take up, and be much in prayer; without continuing in which, there is no coming to the knowledge of the truth: Sin hath so hardened the heart and darkened the understanding, that we cannot know our true state of soul, but by the light of the Lord shining within us,

Be afraid of ~~not~~ knowing yourself, lest thro' this ignorance you should be eternally separated from God. You have several times had a sense of your lost estate by nature; but you have turned away from the Lord, before he has made known to you the forgiveness of sins, and thereby grieved the holy spirit: Wherefore let me intreat you, when you read this, to offer yourself up wholly to the Lord, and remember your backslidings, and endeavour to bring forth fruit meet for repentance. Be diligent to redeem the time; for the work you have to do is very great,

and the time allotted you may be much shorter than you imagine: Slight not the means of grace, take all opportunities to hear the word of God, and there where they endeavour to lay open the secrets of the heart: Beware you do not entertain prejudices against the messengers of Christ Jesus; for he has said concerning them, "He that despiseth you, despiseth me, and him that sent me:" Be upon your guard with respect to false friends, and those that speak smooth words. There is a good work which is always in your power to perform, but I fear you are not much inclined to it; that is, to make to yourself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, as our Lord terms it.

FOR mine own part, I have very little hope of the grace of God taking deep root in you, 'till, as you are able, you shew mercy to the poor. I am persuaded there can be no excuse for this, but that of nature's covetousness, over which you should strive to get the victory: If you are yet a slave to the cursed fear of poverty, so much the more need you have of that faith which overcometh the world. I doubt not that you know, and sometimes feel the want of faith, and at such times, you believe the truths of the gospel, and wish to be a partaker of that knowledge of Christ Jesus, which is an union with him, and gives a sense of the forgiveness of sins. Is not this the reason of your losing the knowledge of these things, the constant free conversation you have with that infidel woman, who is with you? What! will you love her so well as to go to hell with her? And is she not hasting thither? Does she not tread in the steps of her late master, both of
them

them despising the Lord that bought them? I cannot think that your soul will prosper, while she is with you. Do not think it a little sin, to entertain, and cleave to the enemies of our Lord. I read of St. *John*, that going once into a bath, and seeing there a public despiser of the blessed Jesus, he jump't speedily out, fearing (as he said) lest the bath should fall upon him while that heretic was there.

THEREFORE, if you have any distant hope, that Christ will make himself manifest in you, put away from you, his, and your enemy, for so she really is, whatever excuse you may make for her: Lay aside every weight, the sins which so easily beset you; and touch not the unclean thing. If this be too hard, too much to do for Jesus, and the salvation of your soul, how will you bear a guilty conscience in the hour of death, at the awful tribunal, and afterward the gnawing of that worm which never dies, and that fire which is never quenched? The greatest difficulty is at setting out; therefore strive, pray, offer yourself freely to the Lord, and he will help your infirmities, for he doth not despise the day of small things: Confess your sins freely to him, and he will give you to hate them, to be more acquainted with the deceitfulness of your heart, and will give you strength to run the way of his commandments.

THIS is the way, my sister, to true felicity; for, in this way, Christ is revealed, when we find the gospel is indeed the power of God unto salvation, the free forgiveness of our past sins, and the sanctifying of our nature; and then his

commandments are no longer grievous, in the keeping of which there is great reward; at the same time we receive the earnest of our inheritance, and he opens to us his invisible and glorious kingdom; a kingdom, my sister, that is now offered to you. O cast it not away! which you may do, if you do not make use of the present moment. Reflect a while, what kind of spirits would now be ready to receive you, if your soul was leaving your body; can you find a direct answer? If Christ is in you, with eagerness would you say, "Those blessed spirits, who minister to the heirs of salvation." That it may be so, attend to what has been delivered, look into your heart, meditate on the long suffering of the Lord towards you, and let his love lead you to repentance. Now close in with Christ, and say, "Lord! though I have long kept back from thee, I now yield, and sink by dying love compell'd, and own thee conqueror."

MAY the Lord give you to read this as I have wrote it, in much prayer, and direct you in all things that may be for your spiritual and eternal good, and bring at last into his coelestial kingdom, my dear sister, and

Her affectionate friend and servant,

G. G.



LONDON,



LONDON, *Aug. 4, 1762.*

To Miss G—— G——.

DEAR SISTER, G——

HAVING wrote by the packet, I believe I should have omitted this opportunity, being not yet possess'd of that leisure, which I hope soon to enjoy; but that I feared my other letters might miscarry, and thereby my friends think me capable of a neglect, which is far from my design, or inclination, as nothing can give me greater satisfaction than the favour of their correspondence. I assure you, I begin to be almost impatient at the long forced silence that has been between us, as I really find my affections no less attached to yourself, and the whole family, than when I was present with you. I trust all is well, both spiritually and temporally; and that you find our ever gracious Lord daily carrying on his work in your soul, enabling you to live more and more by faith in him who loved you, and gave himself for you; this, as of every other blessing that attends you, I shall greatly rejoice to hear. I desire to be thankful, that he hath preserved me, and brought me hither in safety, and that the means I now enjoy, have been accompanied with his blessing.

O! let us press to the mark, let us plead his power and love, which to all a-like extends. O! what great things hath God in store for those that love him! greater his word assures us, than it hath ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. Let us therefore, my dear sister, come boldly to the

the throne of grace, and be importunate, that out of his divine fulness, we may receive that, which alone ought to satisfy our soul, and let us never rest short of it. I dined last Sunday at Mrs. B——'s with your brother, who had invited me. There was another gentleman at table, whom I did not know, and as we were speaking of being made perfect in love, he mentioned that text concerning the wheat, which is said to be cut down immediately when it is ripe, and said some brought that to prove, that persons did not live long, after the work of grace was compleated in their souls. I gave great attention to Mr. G——'s answer, and as near as I can remember, it was in these words. He said, that mistake arose for want of having duly observed the growth of wheat, which after it is perfectly full in the ear, stands some time to ripen, before it is fit to cut down; and that so after christians had attained to perfect holiness, they may have something to do, and to suffer according to the will of God, before he will call them hence. I know not, if you will think this clear; the reason I mention it, is, that you know we have likewise made our observation on that text. I have since thought of what he then said; and another thing occurred to my mind, as we are taught to improve natural things to spiritual uses, that in respect of our own natural growth, we live many years after we arrive to the stature of a man, which I think similar to the other: Pray my dear, let me know in your next, what you think of these hints; they seem to clear up the point to me in a great measure. May the God of wisdom teach us the things we know not, and give us grace to improve every blessing

to his glory, and our own happiness, and believe
my dear friend, I am,

Your truly affectionate sister in the Lord,

M. L.



Dec. 1767.

To Mrs. G.

DEAR SISTER,

I Acknowledge I have been deficient in good manners, that I have not according to the fashion of the world, complimented you before upon your marriage; and it might appear that I have been wanting in affection also, both to my brother and you, that I have not wrote sooner to you; but if I may be believed, I will assure you, that my long silence has not proceeded from any dislike, that I have taken to his bringing you into a nearer alliance with our family; but entirely to my not knowing how to address myself upon the occasion, so as to make what I should say agreeable to you, and satisfactory to myself. You are sensible according to common report, that I differ in sentiments from the generality of mankind, who think only of living to themselves, and therefore only seek to please themselves, which I acknowledge I myself too much do; but because condemn it, and such a conduct would destroy me, I cannot, when I have time to think, and am upon my guard, act otherwise than as right reason dictates, and the word of God teaches, which is, that I should do all things to his glory:
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And if so, I can no more allow myself to write trifling letters, than I can to speak idle words, all which I must be accountable for at the great audit. If all I speak should be to edification, by parity of reason, all I write should also; and therefore it would undoubtedly be my wisdom so to watch over myself, as that all I speak, and write, may have that tendency.

For this reason, except when I write upon necessary business, I only write upon spiritual subjects, and not believing that such would be agreeable to you, I have declined troubling you with my letters; but conceiving, by coming to a little knowledge of your disposition, that such matters as I would chuse to treat upon, will be kindly received by you, I have ventured to be thus unpolite; I say unpolite, because to talk of, or write upon ~~spiritual things~~, is generally reckoned so by those who are slaves to the world, minding nothing else but pleasure and vanity, how to get riches, and honour. But as I am not yet certain, whether I am an agreeable correspondent, I would be cautious of being tedious, by saying too much on religion, lest I should by it try your patience, and make you dislike the subject. Nevertheless, as I am apprehensive you are pretty gay, and enjoy a good share of the pleasures of life, permit me to tell you, that this world cannot give the pleasure, or satisfy the soul, as the religion of Jesus Christ will. But then observe, that if you would be benefited by it, you must be truly religious, and unreservedly devoted to God; and this will not make you dull, and melancholy, as those imagine who are strangers to scriptural christianity, for it will make you really happy, and nothing else can.

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It is certainly true, what the world calls religion or christianity, is a sad, mopish thing, consisting only in form and ceremony, and denying ourselves sensual enjoyments, without pointing out to us those of a much higher nature, and an eternal duration, and thereby depriving us of pleasure altogether; and this is owing to their having no notion of the work of the Holy Ghost upon the soul, and the spirituality of the law of God, which is holy, just, and good. Bible religion then is that, which affords us solid satisfaction, enables us to rejoice at the approach of death, and qualifies us for glory, and an everlasting inheritance; for it is God dwelling in us by his Spirit, and having fellowship with the father, and his son Jesus Christ; or in other words, it is an union with Christ, in and thro' whom, we are reconciled to God, and enjoy a sense of the forgiveness of all past sins. And of this, a soul can no more doubt, than a condemned malefactor let out of prison, can of his pardon and liberty.

It is also a change of heart, a new inward creation, by which all old things are done away; as slavish distressing fears, distracting anxious cares, false hopes, misplaced affection, unholy desires, vain confidence, and a restless spirit that can be happy in nothing; and all things become new, as the fear of God, whereby the soul fears nothing but sin; the casting all our care upon him, who careth for us, and therefore being careful about nothing, but how to please God and save our souls; a well grounded hope, full of immortality and glory; the love of God shed abroad in the heart, constraining us to love him, his government, his law, and the cross of Jesus, which is truly

truly precious, and all other things, which we should love only in subordination to him; desiring a greater measure of his spirit, and that God's will may be done in us, by us, and upon us; an unshaken confidence that we have redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of our sins, and that he is our portion, our life, our God, and our all, who will withhold from us no manner of thing that is good; will deliver us from all danger, and comfort us by his spirit under every affliction; depending upon him alone, for strength and wisdom to perform every duty, and to avoid every evil, and a constant resting in God, the fountain of all happiness, from which springs up in the heart the peace of God, which the world knows nothing of, and cannot take away, nor affliction of any kind destroy, and a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

Now my sister, but experience all this, and then you shall take, if you can find a relish for them, pleasure in worldly things, or the vanities of life. Either my brother, or his wife, can shew you those scriptures, which prove all that I have asserted, and send you to a few, as I could, if you were here, to a cloud of witnesses of these things. That God, may add to the number, my sister G——, has been, and shall be the prayer of her

Very affectionate brother,

F. G.



LONDON,

LONDON, *Feb.* 17, 1767.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

MAY the God of peace and love dwell in you, and he is indeed in them who believe in him. What cause is there then for painful fears, or anxious cares for the future? Enough perhaps you will say, while I feel my soul contrary to his divine nature, and my will inclin'd to chuse and act for itself. True, if God had commanded us, by our own wisdom and strength to purge out the old leaven; but is not Jesus made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? It is to be fear'd, we rely more on ourselves, than the all-sufficiency of him who alone can save us.

PERHAPS few who believe, will subscribe to this; but if it be not so, why those doubts and evil apprehensions? Why the hope of being better to-morrow, or bless'd by this person, or in that means? Is Christ Jehovah? Is he a spirit? Does he fill heaven and earth? Does he know the secrets of all hearts? And is it a truth, that he inhabits the souls of believers? I say nothing now of his love; let that speak for itself, as it certainly will, if you do not smother and keep it buried as it were under unbelief. Pray then more abundantly for faith, from whence all other graces spring: I mean not a confirmation of this, or that particular truth; but for a lively sense of Christ dwelling in you, notwithstanding all the corruption which remains. The heart is his temple; where he manifests himself to the

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humble and contrite ones : Wherefore he says to every unregenerate soul, " My son, give me thy heart ;" wherein he would set up his kingdom and reign : How much more then does he require it of those whom he hath separated from the world, and given them his spirit, and made joint heirs with himself? Look for Jesus in you, and wherever you are, seek to have him with you, in hearing, or reading, in public or private prayer, and in whatever you do, or intend, embrace him heartily as he is offer'd to you, and you will be sure to have him your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and every thing : So live by the faith of the Son of God, and your peace, life, and every grace shall be retained and increased.

I know there are many persons and things that hinder the progress of the soul, or more properly, *seem* to hinder ; but they cannot possibly do it, if we keep ourselves in the means ; and from evil reasonings. Let us simply, and freely lay those things before the Lord, and the enemy shall get no advantage, and we shall surmount every temptation.

O my friend ! endeavour after this inward life, it is the life which is hid with Christ in God, and will be consummated in Glory. Blessed be Jesus Christ that my heart feels what I write. The Lord is my portion indeed ; my soul was never more united to him : Though bodily pain and weakness increase, and my disorder is such as sometimes to hinder my attention to the word of God ; and to render me incapable of thinking, yet my spirit is never pain'd, because my soul is fixt on him : And through free
grace,

grace, my wife goes not back, and, I hope, increases in faith and love. Last Sunday was our wedding-day, and we were enabled to praise the Lord for the union.

MAY Jesus unite you and all your's in the bonds of the new covenant, and present us all to his father and our father without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, is the prayer of

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

G. C.



LONDON, Jan. 19, 1767.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU will undoubtedly be surprised to hear, that this will be the last time I shall write to you. The Lord, my most gracious God and Saviour, has laid his hand upon me, by a consumption, and I have scarce strength to write for convulsions; but the Lord keepeth my spirit free, and my soul is fixed on him. I can say but little, tho' I could desire to talk largely to you, of the excellency of Christ Jesus. I beseech you and your family to press into him, that you may experience the full efficacy of his most precious blood, for I am still a witness, that he saves to the utmost all that come to the father thro' him. I pray God more abundantly to bless you all, by giving you to be closely united to him, who is the principle of life, and blessedness, and am

Your ever sincere friend,

G. C.

To the same.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BLESSED be the Lord for his loving kindnesses and mercies towards us ; let us offer him all we are, and all we have, and never take ourselves out of his hands ; seeing we find by experience, that all things work for our good, and his will is our sanctification. As we have then nothing to fear, let us believe his word, which tells us, that in the world, we shall have tribulation ; but that in him, we shall have peace : we may therefore come with boldness to the throne, and make our request known to him ; for whatsoever we shall ask the father in his name, he will do it. “ Ask, saith he, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” O ! my brother, continue to ask ’till all unbelief shall be removed ; the promises lie open before you, go up and possess the land of peace, where is quietness and assurance for ever.

I will now inform you of the Lord’s late dealings with me. About ten days before Christmas, I was taken with a cough and spitting, which I took for an asthma from the difficulty of breathing ; also, because I had that disorder about ten years ago : I accordingly treated it as such ; after I had been afflicted about a month, I found my flesh was greatly decay’d, my lungs were ulcerated ; I spitted thick matter, and the pain in my breast, as also down my back, and all the muscular parts of my body, was great, and increasing daily ; from all which, I knew it must have been a consumption, and could have but little hopes of life. I then gave up my self to the
Lord,

Lord, determining that he should be my physician, for I would have no other; and if he pleased to direct me to any simple thing, I would thankfully make use of it. I thought I would look into Mr. W—'s primitive physick, but I deserr'd it for two days; on Monday se'nnight I desired my wife to make some neat's-foot jelly, (as prescribed in the above book) tho' I knew not, that I should ever make use of it, because the night before profuse sweats came on, and I was then exceeding weak, convulsed from head to foot, and the fever very violent, so that I did not expect to see the day light; I found no guilt upon my conscience, tho' a sense of my unfaithfulness caused me to shed a few tears, and I was able to give myself into the hands of the Lord with perfect resignation, and not to desire to be in any other state of body, my petitions being all summed up in these words, "Thy will be done." Before morning the fever was abated; at eight I arose chiefly to write to you, but the convulsions being very strong upon me, was the cause of my writing to you as I did in my last; soon after which I went to bed, and about one o'clock got a little sleep; when I awoke, my wife brought me some of the jelly, which I took twice before night, and found some ease; the pain in my breast began to go off, and I found a little strength; the next day I could taste my food, and my appetite returned, so that I grew stronger day by day; and now, blessed be God, the fever is removed, my spitting is less, my lungs are healing, and my pains asswaged; all this hath he wrought, and to me it is a kind of resurrection from the dead. I thank him that he has not only thus restored me, but given me a confidence that he will never suffer me to sin a-

gainst him, but will perform all his great and precious promises in me. What is too great for our God to accomplish in the believing soul!

I pray God your heart may be disposed to receive with thankfulness, every visitation of the Lord, and that by these as well as his divine operations, and outward blessings, you and your family may increase in faith, power, and love.

I remain,

Your affectionate brother in
our only Lord Jesus Christ,

G. C.



SIR,

October 30, 1765.

I Should certainly have answered your obliging letter from *Ireland*, had not the late date occasioned me to believe, that you would be gone from that place, before mine could have reached your hands; but having received your favour from *Antigua*, and an opportunity now offering, I embrace it, to acknowledge my sensibility of the kindness you have shewn, in retaining a remembrance of so unworthy a person.

I really felt some concern for your spiritual interest, upon your leaving a part of the world, so highly favoured with the gospel, and abounding with christian friends, and returning to a place where those privileges have been so much slighted, supposing it would expose you to many trials, and the more so, as we were at that very time in expectation

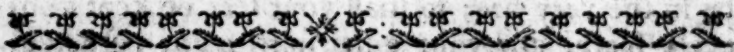
pectation of Mr. G——'s coming to *England*, and the melancholy reflection that your brother who did once run well, was now turn'd aside; and perhaps (said my forboding fears) instead of strengthening his brother's hands in God, will be the unhappy instrument of leading this poor traveller (to *Zion*) into bye paths also; but God who is wont to be better to us than our fears, has by his grace supported you hitherto, and has also indulged you with a continuance of Mr. G—— among you, which how great soever the cross is to us, I am persuaded is for the furtherance of his work in that island. O! that the people would know how to prize such a burning and shining light, and improve the tender mercies of God to the salvation of their immortal souls! May your mind be stayed upon the living God, and your firm purpose be to serve and glorify him, tho' it be in the very fire; so shall your feet be kept from every snare, and your quiet spirit enjoy perpetual peace. Amidst the busy whirl of this tumultuous life, he is all-sufficient, a heart-satisfying good; in his favour there is life, his name is a strong tower, and his children have a never failing place of refuge and defence. O what is all the world in competition with an interest in Jesus! It is worth bartering every temporal consideration, to gain this central point of bliss supreme.

I should be glad to hear, that your brother had some apprehension of the sad exchange that he has made, in quitting heaven for earth, and in suffering the God of this world so to blind his eyes, as to occasion him to take the substance for a shadow, and the shadow for a substance. O that by an interposition of divine grace, he may remember

ber from whence he is fallen; repent, do his first works, and return to his first love! for surely he must yet acknowledge, that it was better with him in those happy seasons, than it can possibly be now, even amidst all the smiles of fortune. Alas! may the soul reflect, what is every other enjoyment to me without my God! 'tis he alone can satisfy my large desires, which gasps for more than earth can give, and is too capacious to be satiated with sublunary joys. Please to give my respects to all your family, my best wishes attend them; and that you, Sir, may prosper in your own soul, and be an instrument of conveying the favor of grace to all with whom you have any converse, is the sincere prayer of,

Your obliged humble servant,

M. L.



To the Reverend Mr. J. F.

Jan. 1767.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I Was for a about a fortnight an happy witness of the unfeigned faith and unwearied patience of my dear departed sifter, who is now with God in glory. She was not suffered to entertain the least doubt or fear of her salvation, toward the close of her long and painful illness, though she was not favoured with very bright manifestations of the reconciled Father's love, 'till she was conflicting with the agonies of death, which lasted upwards of four hours. Then she declared she could sing the believers song, "O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory!"

And

And in that blessed interval of time, many sweet and evangelical expressions dropt from her trembling lips, from which the true believer, in the same awful circumstances, might gather much comfort and stability. "I rejoice (said she,) that I am saved by grace alone; this will heighten my happiness above! A sinner saved, Mercy! Mercy!" When she was asked by my sister, "What is the world to you now, my dear?" She replied, "No more than a bit of burnt paper, only my friends that are in it." Perceiving my mother and sister to weep over her, she took them each by the hand, and tenderly said, "You grieve me: Why do you repine at my happiness? I am going to glory, I am full of matter, but I want breath to utter the half of what I feel: This is the hour I have long waited for; and now I have nothing but a prospect of happiness before me." A few days before her death, she proposed a question, which both pleased and improved me: "Do you think, brother, (said she,) that departed saints know what is done upon earth?" I asked her, why she enquired? She cheerfully replied, "Because it would give me pleasure to know, that my friends went on well in the ways of God." Herein her love to us was like that of her dying master's (whose steps she followed) to his disciples, of whom it is recorded, that having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. To the young woman who watched with her, she said, "Strive to make your calling and election sure. What is the world to me now? If I had not an interest in Christ, I should be miserable at this time." On *Saturday* evening, being informed

formed the next day was the Sabbath, "I trust (said she) "I shall then begin to spend an eternal "Sabbath." I left her upon *Saturday* in the afternoon, and on *Sunday*, about one o'clock a messenger brought me word, that she died that morning at half an hour past five. It made such an impression on my wife and me, as, I trust, will remain with us unto death.

To part with so amiable a sister, from whom I had received much good instruction, and many other favours, was very grievous to the flesh; but the consideration of her being released from a life of pain and sickness, and translated to glory, reconciled me to the otherwise afflictive Providence, and inclined my heart to bless and praise God for his goodness to her. Between ten and eleven this morning, my mother, sister, and self, attended her to the grave, to pay her deserted body the last kind office of friendship: She was interred in *Berwick* chapel, close by the remains of my dear father. The sight of both coffins called loudly, "Be ye also ready, for at "an hour ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." There were in the chapel few dry eyes of those who knew her manner of life and conversation. She was one of those few names in our *Sardis*, who had not defiled their garments; and she is now walking with Christ in white, the apparel of the saints. My dying sister left yourself, and people, a legacy of love and good wishes for your spiritual prosperity. I am

DEAR SIR, with great sincerity,

your affectionate brother in Christ,

T. H.

To



To Mrs. H—,

January 30, 1767.

DEAR MADAM,

I HEARD last night the news of Miss H—n's death; as the stroke had long been threatned you, and she had thro' mercy resigned herself to it, I trust it hath not found you without the shield of resignation, patience, and confidence in God. A sparrow you know falls not to the ground without his permission, much less can a member of his son fall into the grave without his direction: Surely he is infallible, he hath chosen the better part both for you and your daughter; he hath taken her out of her misery, to translate her to the place where the weary are at rest, and to give you, by removing her, an opportunity of caring for your soul, as you cared for her body. Now what have you to do, Madam, but to put your hand upon your mouth, and say, "It is the Lord, he gave, and he hath taken away, blessed be his holy name." If you sorrow, let it be in hope of meeting her again all glorious within and without, whom you lately saw such a spectacle of mortality. *David* observed in the lesson for this morning, that the love of *Jonathan* had been better to him than the love of women: O! dwell much upon the consideration of the love of Jesus, and you will find it far surpasses that of the most dutiful children; and comfort yourself by the believing thought that Jesus lives, lives for you, and that your daughter lives in him, where you will soon meet her with joy as an incarnate angel.

I am with prayers for you and Miss F——,
to whom I wish much consolation in her never
failing friend, our blessed Lord,

DEAR MADAM,

Your unworthy obliged servant in Christ,

J. F.



To Mrs. H——.

January, 1767.

DEAR MADAM,

IT was only last night I received the account
of Miss H——'s death: The letter was de-
layed by the waters being out. I wish it had
come sooner, that I might have been among the
first of her absent friends, who should have ex-
press'd the regard they had for her, by condoling
with, and endeavouring to comfort the dear pa-
rent she has left behind.

BELIEVE me, dear Madam, I see the affliction
you are labouring under in some of it's most
aggravating circumstances, but your own mind
will, I fear, too often dwell on these. Fain
would I have you do as *David* did; when his
child was dead, he put off his sack-cloth, he
wiped away his tears, and in patience possessed
his soul. Nay you are not a Jew, as *David* was,
but a Christian. I would have you go farther,
and in this, as well as every other circumstance
of life, " Rejoice evermore, and in every thing
" give thanks; and you have the highest reason
to do so. Let me just mention a few things,
that should lead you to gratitude and praise at
this

this season. Be thankful that you are called chearfully to resign such a dear comfort into the hands of God, and, by this means, have a new proof that you love him better than daughters, or sons, or all the world: Be thankful, that you have such an opportunity given you, to shew to others the excellency of the religion of Jesus, which can make such a tender parent easy, chearful, and happy, under the loss of such an amiable and beloved child: Be thankful, that you have enjoyed the blessing so long, and have been so often refreshed, quickened, and comforted by her prayers, conversation, and example. O! Be thankful, my dear Madam, that you have been the mother of a child, who has done so much honour to religion, so much good to others, who is raised to such dignity and glory, and is made a citizen of *Zion*, a companion of angels, and is before the throne day and night giving glory to him, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Be thankful, that you have got one other band, which used to tie you to earth, broken; and have got one other loadstone to draw your heart and affections to heaven, where Jesus is, and where dear sister H—— is. Be thankful, that you have such reason to hope you shall see her again with joy, dwell with her in glory, and together celebrate the riches of divine grace for ever.

AND now, just turn your eyes from the glorious, transporting prospect, for a single moment, and think, what cause for thankfulness you have, arising from other quarters. Think, how many affectionate children you have yet remaining: O! think with gratitude, how a kind Providence

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has so ordered your worldly circumstances, that you can now easily do without her whom God has taken: Think, how many friends you have, (amongst whom, I beg you will with the greatest confidence place me,) who will never see you want any comfort in this life, which it is in their power to administer. I might mention many circumstances more; but when your mind is once turned into this channel of praise, it will find out numberless more, which I cannot be acquainted with. Let then the hands which hung down with sorrow, be raised up in thanksgiving, and the eyes which wept for grief, now weep for joy. I am sure this will be pleasing to God, and have the most happy tendency to prepare your soul to follow your dear daughter, to follow Jesus, who is also gone before, and to live with both for ever.

Believe me to be,

DEAR MADAM,

Your sincere and affectionate

Friend in Christ,

R. G.



To the Rev. Mr. J—. W—.

REV. SIR,

I Have often felt a grateful sense of the divine goodness, in instructing the children of men in that pleasing art, which so alleviates the pain of absence, and compensates for the loss of the agreeable and profitable converse of those we particularly esteem and regard, by enabling us to maintain an intercourse, while at the greatest distance,
which

which though imperfect, is productive of much satisfaction, and frequently answers many valuable purposes: And as I highly prize this privilege, especially in your correspondence, I could not but be sensibly concerned at the loss of your last favour; and the more so, as I flattered myself that as a father to his child, you would have spoke your sentiments freely upon the important step I have been influenced (I trust by the divine guidance) to take; which, if approved of, would have afforded me great pleasure; but as that failed in coming to hand, I could wish to intrude upon your golden moments for that indulgence to be repeated; and am more abundantly anxious, Mr. G—— having been informed by Mr. F—— of your indisposition, from which we so truly desire to hear you are perfectly recovered. O! that your days may be prolonged, that the pleasure of the Lord may prosper in your hands, and that though late, you may obtain a full reward; and that among the many children which you may present to him who gave them to you, I may be numbered, is the ardent prayer of,

REV. SIR,

Your affectionate daughter in the gospel,

M. L.



To Miss S— G—.

Nov. 13, 1765.

I Wrote a long letter to my dear S— soon after my removal from *London*, which I direct-

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ed for you at Sir G— C—, and cannot doubt of your having received it, though I have been disappointed in the pleasing expectation of an answer; which, if it had contained only two lines, giving me an account of your and your brother's health, would have been extremely satisfactory; especially as it also would have been a tender proof of the continuance of that affection, you have so frequently express'd.

I hope it was not the serious subject of my letter, which has deprived me of the pleasure, and that you will not plead the excuse of many others, that you cannot write upon such topics, as I shall always receive your letters affectionately be the theme what you please; though I should certainly rejoice to find you more attentive to this so interesting, so important a concern, and which is the only basis of solid happiness.

PERHAPS among many other objections to my reasonings and assertions upon this head, none may have greater weight with you than a delusive notion, that you are too young to make religion your sole aim as yet, or it may be you have some confused ideas that my principles are quite repugnant to the Church of *England*: But these may soon be obviated; the first, by duly considering the frailty of our mortal state, and the vast uncertainty of life, instances of which are so continually offered to our observation, that it is needless to use arguments to convince us of a point that is so clearly prov'd by experience; and the latter, by first acquainting yourself with our doctrine, and then comparing it with the Articles

Articles of the Church; and indeed the one is so entirely consistent with the other, that I need only to direct you to the latter, in order to be fully informed of the former.

LET my dear sister read the ninth, the eleventh, and thirteenth Articles which are in her own Prayer-Book, which also are more fully explained in the Homilies, and would be worth your while to purchase and peruse, as they would make you better acquainted with the principles you yourself profess, and you will there see the fundamental points on which the METHODISTS insist; and, O! that you would seriously reflect that you, my dear, are greatly interested therein.

THESE are the things, the knowledge of which makes for your peace: True spiritual religion is as necessary for this in life, as in death, for they and only they enjoy the present world who live in a constant preparation for a better: Into which, may propitious goodness administer an abundant admittance to

MY DEAR S—,

And her affectionate Sister,

G—.



To the same.

Feb. 20, 1766.

I Am pleased the theme of my last letter was not disagreeable to my dear sister, as I shall be encouraged thereby now to enlarge a little upon so important a subject as the salvation of
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the soul of man. My dear girl may think me vain, in attempting to write upon what numbers imagine themselves unfit for; but I regard not the applause of the creature; if I did, I should never have joined the despised (though happy) people called **METHODISTS**: The winning of my dear sister over to Christ being what I aim at, I am willing to be thought meanly of, so my end should at last be answered.

PERMIT me then with all plainness to assert, what I can very easily prove, if the word of God may be depended upon, that you, my dear child, are under very dangerous mistakes in regard of what concerns your most important interest; and in order to make this appear, I must remark upon your own words. And first, you assure me, that you do not think your youth any reasonable objection to your making religion your sole aim; though immediately after, you are for postponing it, like *Felix*, to a more convenient season. But O! remember, we do not read that he ever enjoyed or improved such a season; nor are you sure that you shall, except you catch the present golden moments as they fly. Secondly, I am no less amazed than grieved to hear you a few lines farther, say, that you flatter yourself, that as yet, you have no great sins to answer for: Alas! my sister, have you ever read the 22d chapter and 37th verse of St. *Matthew*, where our Lord says, that the first and greatest commandment is, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and that the second is like unto it, the loving of thy neighbour as thyself; and declares that upon these two hang all the law and the prophets. Let me beg of you
to

to try yourself by this touch-stone, for I cannot imagine you are so void of understanding as to suppose you love the Lord in this manner, while your heart, instead of being entirely engrossed by him, is more attentive to the pleasures, customs, and manners of this present vain delusive world. Then observe, if you have broken the first commandment, you have transgressed the most comprehensive one of all; and consequently if you die under the guilt of it, will be numbered with the chief of sinners. But what do you make of original sin, the total depravity of our nature? You have been taught in the Church Catechism that we are born in sin, and by nature the children of wrath. Perhaps you have adopted the vulgar error, that we are regenerated in baptism; but the same Catechism also teaches, that the washing of water is only the outward and visible sign, which will avail us nothing, except when we grow up to riper years, we really experience the inward and spiritual grace.

You also seem to speak very lightly of the giddiness of youth: But does God in his sacred word make any such allowance? Quite the contrary. You will find in *Eccles.* xi. 9. the consequence of a young person's rejoicing, or being merry in his youth, and walking in the way of his heart: "That for all these things, the Lord will bring him to judgment:" A thought, which for it's weight and importance, is enough to abate all the force and vigour of youthful vanities. Our blessed Lord also informs us, that in the day of judgment, we shall give an account for every idle word that we have spoken.

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LET not my dear S—— then talk of correcting her imperfections, but know, that she has need of an entire change of heart, and that this is the gift of God by the operation of his blessed spirit: And this mighty work, if not accomplished in the short day of life, before the night of death comes, will render our existence a curse, though infinite goodness designed it for a blessing. And notwithstanding this is the work of God upon the soul, yet it must diligently be sought after and carefully attended to by us; for God exhorts us in his holy word to “ask that we may receive, to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, and to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.” We are certainly sent into the world to glorify God, and to be useful to our fellow-creatures; but how this valuable purpose can be answered in the enjoyments of what, in the language of a mistaken world, are called innocent amusements, I learn neither from scripture, reason, nor experience. I rather think those are persons who live for none but themselves, and none are worthy the name of Christians, who do not endeavour to do all possible good to the bodies and souls of men, and those who love God are constrained, from that very principle, to maintain good works of every kind.

I did not suppose you meant to reflect upon my opinions, because I had fully proved them to be the same as those of the established Church, of which you profess yourself a member; nor am I tenacious of them as principles derived from man, but as being the revealed will of God. I would not have you imagine, that I deduce the happiness

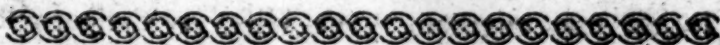
happinefs I ſpeak of in mine own ſoul, as ariſing from my being joined to any particular ſect; for nothing can render an immortal ſoul compleatly ſo, but the conſcious enjoyment of the divine favour and preſence; and this unſpeakable bleſſing is ſo unconfined and free, that every one may experience it who will ſeek it with all their heart, be they of whatſoever Church they will: Our Lord, the purchaſer and diſpoſer of this pearl, offers it to all, ſaying, “ Whoſoever is a-
“ thirſt come, and let him take of the water of
“ life freely.” *Revel. xxii. 17.*

O! that you would ſearch the ſacred pages, not cursorily, but as one deeply intereſted in their import, at the ſame time humbly imploring the aſſiſtance and divine illuminations of the Holy Ghoſt, who at firſt dictated them, that they might be “ a lamp to the feet, and a light to
“ the path” of poor erring mortals, who, without them, would have wandered in ceafeleſs mazes of deplorable uncertainty, but now have no cloak for their wilful ignorance.—That you may receive and enjoy the extenſive benefit they proffer, is the ſincere wiſh of,

MY DEAR S——’s

affectionate ſiſter,

G——.



Auguſt 25, 1766.

To the ſame.

I SHOULD have answered my dear ſiſter’s letter immediately, had not my dear friend
Mrs.

Mrs. —, been extremely ill at the time I received it. She is now recovering, and I have taken the earliest opportunity of congratulating you upon the agreeable circumstance you therein inform me of, your intended marriage, the solemnities of which, (according to the time you mention,) are, I imagine, over. I am pleased with the character of Mr. S—, and doubt not, but that your friends have your welfare so much at heart as to make a proper choice in so material a point; besides which, to be happily dispos'd of in such a relation, is in a peculiar manner to be ascribed to that indulgent providence, who sweetly conducts the affairs of human life: And as it is a matter of the greatest importance, it will be your interest, as well as duty, to implore the divine blessing upon, and direction in this new situation; for tho' you may have a fair prospect of temporal felicity; you should always bear in mind, that your chief happiness consists in the knowledge and favour of God; as that not only sweetens the enjoyments of life, but is also a sure support amidst all the vicissitudes thereof; and the only means to enable us to close the last scene well. You know, that however unpolite it may appear to the modern world, the scripture accounts them only wise and happy, who are always mindful of their latter end, and constantly preparing for so awful and uncertain a period. That every change in life may augment your bliss, is the earnest prayer of,

My dear sister,

Yours very affectionately,

G—.

To



To the same.

THE affection I bear my dear sister, renders her long silence at any time in no wise pleasing; not that I impute it to want of regard, for I cannot do that injustice to one, who tho' ingrossed in the most important affairs in life, and in the midst of a variety of gay circumstances, has been punctual and frequent in writing to me. No, my dear, I must acknowledge your constancy, and on that account, as also from the tenderness I have always experienced towards you, sincerely rejoice and congratulate you upon every indulgent providence. May the state into which you are now entered, be always attended with every pleasing occurrence, and the happiness you now experience be augmented, as time rolls round; and may kind heaven exempt you from vicissitudes and every grief. But O! my dearest sister, if this should be indulged, permit me to add another full as ardent, and still more momentous wish, that such mercies may be suitably received, and make a due impression on your heart; in order to which, there must be unfeigned gratitude, deep humility, and a constant remembrance that " blessings here, " are trials, not rewards, and should alarm us full " as much as woes, and awake us to their cause " and consequence." This you know, is Dr. Young's just sentiment; they are not, my dear, intended to obliterate from our memory, our mortal state, nor the things that are eternal; but rather being freed from many vexations that are apt to distract the thought, we may be the more capacitated to remember that awful period, when

we shall (tho' ever so agreeably situated) find a dispensation from every sublunary concern. Alas! What is our life? It is even as a vapour, that appeareth for a very short duration, and then our place knoweth us no more; but if we acknowledge God in all our ways, and seek his favour to crown every other blessing, we shall have our names inscribed in the Lamb's book of life, and be had in everlasting remembrance. I know the polite world would think this advice very unreasonable at such a juncture; but I have learned, that whatsoever concerns our future bliss, is always opportune; because we are creatures of a day, and no age, or circumstance, however pleasing can secure us from the summons, we must one (tho' now unknown) day receive. I sincerely hope, that as your family, and consequently your duties increase, you may be directed to a discharge of them, that so each may prove a source of happiness.

My sister B—— has a very poor state of health, and the winter tries her much. Our friends in A—— were all well when I heard from them last, which is a few weeks since. My sister, brother, and nieces, send their kind love to you. Please to remember us also to Mr. S—, whom, though unknown to us at present, we must esteem for your sake, and whose health and happiness, together with your's, will always augment that of,

MY DEAR SISTER'S,

Most affectionate,

G——.

To

To Miss M—. G—.

AS I very tenderly love my dear Miss P—, and therefore am truly solicitous for her happiness, I could not but greatly regret your absence last night, when I think we had one of the most profitable meetings I have ever experienced in my class. I believe the Lord was present of a truth, and almost every heart was quickened, and every bosom warmed by the animating account that Mrs. M— gave of the Lord's gracious dealings with her soul, which was set at liberty the night before at twelve o'clock; when, as she was praying and weeping, he was pleased to pass by, and she related as clear a sense of his pardoning love as I ever heard. Some of her expressions were as follow: "I can now truly call
 "Jesus, my Lord and my God: I have no
 "fear of death, nor the least sense of guilt; but
 "I feel as a new-born babe, and the name of
 "Jesus is sweeter to my ears than words can
 "describe." She said that she was so full of divine love, that nature could scarce support it, but was really sick and overpowered by it.

WHEN my dear love reads this instance of the grace and mercy of the God she seeks, let her waiting heart exult in the pleasing expectation, that this happy lot shall soon be your's, and doubt not of the ability and willingness of God your Saviour, for he will not disappoint your most sanguine wishes. Remember that comprehensive assertion, that he will do more for us than we can ask or think. May your

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out after him, may every gracious desire be increased, and all the blessings of indulgent heaven be poured upon

MY DEAREST Miss P—,
and her truly affectionate,

M. L.



Feb. 15, 1768.

DEAR SISTER,

I LONG to have you joined to the Lord in one spirit, that you may be happy in him. But how shall it be effected? With great facility; if you are but reconciled to God, and can but believe that he is already absolutely reconciled to you. Should this appear strange news to you, search the Bible, and you will find it really so. If God was in Christ, reconciling the world (even whilst it lay in the wicked one,) to himself, you might with great propriety say, God was in Christ, reconciling *me* to himself; inasmuch as the *world* there, as well as in most parts of scripture, if not throughout the whole, comprehends all the fallen race; and if every individual, then consequently you.

I would ask, if you doubt the truth of this assertion, whether you do not believe, according to God's infallible word, that Christ tasted death for every man? And if so, did he not die for you, and bear all your sins? Did he not pay for you the debt you had contracted, and could never discharge, and make all the satisfaction divine justice could require? If it be thus, what farther

farther demands can God have against you? Why none; for he is fully satisfied, his wrath is appeased, and he ready to acknowledge you his child, which he will, as soon as you believe the report.

SINCE this is the case, there can be but two things which keep sinners from this unspeakable blessing. The first is, they are not themselves reconciled to God; therefore, though God is reconciled to them, they remain still wretched and miserable: And how should they be otherwise, seeing that both parties are not agreed; and if two do not accord, and the one especially is at perfect enmity against the other, can they possibly walk together? God being reconciled to sinners, avails them nothing, whilst they fight against him, trample upon his laws, disdain his government, reject his offers of mercy, continue in sin because he is good, and thereby remain irreconcilable: But in this class, I do not place you. Therefore I shall proceed to shew secondly, the next thing which deprives poor sinners of the blessing, and which I really believe is the only reason why you do not enjoy it; and it is this: The not believing that God is reconciled to them. For if he is, and they are reconciled to God, what hinders? Nothing surely, but unbelief; for "he that believeth, hath eternal life," and in another place, "is passed from death unto life." And the apostle *Paul* affirms, we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. And 'till a sinner, though never so diligent and sincere a seeker, believes that God is reconciled to him, he cannot be happy; and how should he, whilst he imagines that the wrath of God abideth on him?

Or is it possible that he should love God, before he believes that God has first loved him? "We love him, (saith St. *John*) because he first loved us." And if we do not believe that he loves us, and therefore not love him, can we enjoy true felicity? No certainly, it is absolutely impossible. And if God so loved us, as that whilst we were yet in our sins, he said unto us, "Live;" it is a proof that he was reconciled to us, (though not to our sins,) while we were yet sinners; for God cannot possibly love what he is not reconciled to; it is a contradiction in terms: Then it follows, if God was not reconciled, and loved us not, while we were sinners, and in our blood, that he never will be reconciled to us at all.

Now I verily believe that God is reconciled to you, and that you are to him; and that therefore nothing remains for you, but to be firmly persuaded of this great truth, in order to enjoy the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. Yet, if you should after all say, though it be true that God is reconciled to you, that you are not reconciled to him, I would ask you, are you not grieved that you have offended him? Do you not desire to love and obey him in thought, word, and deed? That you do not, is it not your burthen, and at times intolerable, almost too heavy for you to bear? Have you not put yourself under his government, and do you not approve of all his laws, as holy, just, and good? Have you not given up to him your children, yourself, body and soul, with all your concerns? Have you not chosen him for your portion, and do you not prefer him to life itself,
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and all created good, so as to be willing to suffer any pain, and the loss of all things rather than grieve him? If it be so, as I really believe it is, I will be bold to affirm that you are reconciled to God, as I will venture to assert that he was reconciled to you, long before you had a thought of turning to him; for had it not been the case, he would never have given you the power to seek him, or created in your breast a hatred to sin, and a desire to love and serve him. He offers to sinners the grace of repentance because he is reconciled, and not to reconcile them first to himself, that he might afterwards be reconciled to them. But, as a prince, from his benignity to rebels, makes the first overture, and offers pardon to all that will throw down their arms, and submit to have him reign over them; (which clemency is the result of his reconciliation, and the strongest proof of it,) so that nothing is required of them but to be reconciled to their prince, which implies a submitting to his government, and owning him for their sovereign, when again they enjoy all their forfeited privileges, and have a right to expect his protection: Or, as a father that is reconciled to an undutiful son, is grieved to see him destroying himself by riotous living, offers, even before he begins to amend, to receive him again into his favour, and acknowledge him for his child, if he will but be obedient for the future; which concession he would never have made, had he not first been reconciled to him. Is it not then plain, that this proffer is the effect of the father's being reconciled, and that it cannot possibly be the result of the child's repentance, who still goes on in his wicked course? And indeed were the latter reconciled, and the former

not, he would not be influenced to be kind to him by any thing he could say or do; Where there is no reconciliation, experience teaches us, no favour is to be expected. : Just so it stands between God and us : For were we reconciled to God, and he not to us, in vain should we pray to him to have mercy upon us; but as this is not the case, (for which all thanks and praise be ascribed to Jesus Christ,) but the reverse, the Lord's ambassadors are sent out to beseech us, as it were in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. Had the question been ask'd *St. Paul*, why he did so beseech us, his answer would undoubtedly have been, because God is already reconciled to you, and therefore nothing is wanting to make you happy, but to be reconciled to him. Wherefore whensoever we find a hatred to sin, a love to God's laws, and a desire to serve him, we may assuredly conclude, that God continues reconciled, and that we have not out-lived our day of grace, for those things which I have just mentioned are the blessed effects thereof. What remains then, but that my dear sister believe the report, or the glad tidings of great joy, as called in the gospel, that she may enter into rest? But let her observe, that according to *St. Paul*, we must believe with the heart, and not with the head only, for that is unto righteousness. May the Lord help you so to believe!

NOTWITHSTANDING I write thus, that nothing remains but for us to be reconciled to God, after believing that he is really reconciled to us, in order to be happy; yet I would not be so understood, as that this happiness can spring up in the soul without an union with the blessed Jesus,
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from which we can only derive it ; but that the not being reconciled to God, or the not believing that he is so to us, or both, is the grand, (if I may not be allowed to say, the only) hindrance. For though it be true, that God is reconciled, yet we are not pardoned, or acquitted, and consequently not accounted righteous, any more than we can receive the privileges of children, 'till we are in Christ, when we immediately receive the witness of our acceptance. This doctrine, I think, must appear clear to an unprejudiced mind, when he considers that Christ is stiled " the Lord " our-righteousness ;" for I would ask, why is he so called ? but that because when we are in him, we are accounted righteous by virtue thereof, and acquitted as such, our former sins being no longer imputed to us, inasmuch as Christ bore them all in his own body on the tree : " God made him to be sin for us who knew no " sin, that we might be made the righteousness " of God through him ;" that is, by being united to him. And as we are thus " accepted in " the beloved," so are we sanctified in him, sanctification beginning as soon as we are justified, or united to Christ : Therefore, that which is the cause of our justification, is the cause of the other also ; for it is as impossible to be joined to Christ in one spirit, and not derive from him a degree of his nature or divine image, as it is absurd to suppose that we can be esteemed righteous out of him ; and as the union increases, so does sanctification. With regard to farther particulars, I refer you to a sixpenny Tract, intitled, *A Treatise on Christian Perfection*.

I think no reasonable awakened person will deny the above to be scriptural ; and if it be, it is a strong

strong proof that the doctrine of Predestination cannot. It can't be supposed, without altering the just notion we have of God, that he is infinitely holy, and good, and therefore loving to every man, that he should assure us in the strongest terms, that he is in Christ reconciled to us; and as a proof of it, commission his embassadors to beseech us to be reconciled to him, and send his judgments, as well as denounce threatnings, in order to drive us to a reconciliation to himself, as also endeavour to draw us to it with tender mercies and loving kindneses various ways, and with great and precious promises, beside complaining and expostulating with us that we will not come to him that we might have life, and swearing by himself, as he could swear by none greater, that he willeth not the death of a sinner.

IT appears to me then beyond dispute, if God is reconciled to all the world, (and if he is not, sin abounds much more than grace, and that scripture which says, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," is false,) then all the world, that is to say, every child of *Adam*, who have already made their exit might have been, and all who are now upon the earth, or shall hereafter be upon it, may be saved; and that all who are, or shall be lost, perish because of their obstinacy, and for their not being reconciled to God, and not because that God was not reconciled to them, and made it impossible for them to be saved: No, very far from it; for God being reconciled to the whole fallen race, he, as a kind father, offers that grace to every individual, whereby all may be saved; but that the grace is rejected and slighted is too true from
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daily experience, as it is also clear from that plaintive interrogation of the Lord's, "Why will ye die, O house of *Israel*?" And lamentation, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life:" Which would have been unjust, and a mocking of his poor creatures, did he not make it possible for them to have come. And St. *Peter* boldly asserts, that "God is not willing that any should perish." Blessed be God, he doth not deal with us after this manner: He is truly sincere in all he says and does; insincerity belongs not to him, but to man.

THESE words of St. *Paul*'s in his first epistle to the *Corinthians*, xv. 22, "As in *Adam* all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," sufficiently evince, that the merits of Christ's death and sufferings extend as far, and reach the whole human race without exception, as the demerits of *Adam*'s disobedience has. Observe the scope of the apostle's argument: "As in *Adam* All die, even so All; how many? Why as in the first *Adam* All die, even so All in Christ, the second *Adam*, shall be made alive. The words *even so*, as well as the word *all*, are very emphatical, and deserve peculiar notice. The same apostle, in order (as one might imagine) to make this important truth plain, and keep it from being perverted, speaks as clearly, though more largely upon it, in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the *Romans*, "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." As if he had said, the case between the offence and the
free

gift is in one sense similar; the one stretching itself to as many as the other, though in another sense it is not so, as the benefits we might receive from Christ is much more considerable than what we should have received from *Adam* had he stood. If by the offence of one, many were dead; shall not the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, be much more efficacious, and abound to many, even to as many, as the offence hath? Were the apostle to answer the question, he would undoubtedly reply, Yes surely. For shall the transgression of one, and he a creature too, extend farther and prevail more, than the grace, and the gift by grace through Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for evermore? Could it be so; the parallel drawn by St. *Paul* between the first and second *Adam* would in no wise be just.

“ Where sin abounded, grace did much more
 “ abound.” *Rom. v. 20.* But can this be true, if the greatest part of mankind are unavoidably damned, even infants who never knew any evil? And if saving grace is not purchased for, and given to all, whereby all children dying without actual transgression, are eternally saved, and freely offer’d to others, after their own sins, when arrived to riper years, have separated between God and them, that they may be redeemed from all iniquity? Unless all are restored by the second, as all were lost in the first *Adam*, and are accountable only for their own sins, and not for their first parent; grace doth not abound more than sin, but sin more than grace. Now this is the thing the apostle is endeavouring to prove from the above scriptures, and appears to be his meaning

ing, without forcing the words, and nothing else can (except the greater benefits and blessings that might accrue to every one from the second representative, than could from the first); the second stepping into the place of the first, gives life to all who died in him. "For as in *Adam* all died, even so in *Christ*, shall all be made alive."

It is worth observing, that where the apostle in this chapter uses the word *many*, for those who are benefited by Christ's death, he has the same expression for those who are ruined by *Adam's* sin; thereby making it manifest that the one is to be understood in as full a sense, and in the same latitude as the other, and that the *many* in both places mean *all*. I see no reason, nor scripture, to the contrary, but abundance of both to maintain and strengthen the above doctrine. Therefore as all partake of the fall, and are involved in *Adam's* transgression, so all are benefited by Christ, and will, if their own sins and unbelief prevent not, be eternally saved. Notwithstanding we are all by nature children of wrath, being the offspring of disobedient parents; yet by Christ and thro' grace, we are all made the children of God, and remain so, 'till we by our own sins, as they did by theirs, forfeit our privileges. And this in no wise contradicts our bringing into the world with us an evil nature, any more than an adult person obtaining a sense of the forgiveness of sins, proves that he has not inbred sin to grapple with afterwards. It demonstrates indeed, that we are all born without guilt, tho' not without an evil heart of unbelief, which soon causes us to depart from the living God, and makes as much against final perseverance, (seeing none can per-

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rish without falling from grace) as against predestination. Upon the whole, it appears clear from what has been said, that all infants are in a redeemed state, and if dying, before they come to the knowledge of good and evil, will be received, thro' Christ the door, into the kingdom of glory. *Isaiah, Hosea, and Ezekiel*, will bear me out in all that I have advanced. The first says, "Your iniquities" (not *Adam's* nor *Eve's*) "have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, chap. 59. ver. 2." The second speaking in like manner, cries out, "Return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquities," chap. 14. ver. 1. But the last clears the matter up entirely, and boldly affirms, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." chap. 18. ver. 20. In these scriptures as well as in innumerable more, our heavenly father declares, that he is a just and merciful God, that his ways are all equal, and will do right. O let us believe this, and not make him a tyrant, or an austere master!

BUT, I would hope that my dear sister will, long ere this reaches her, be reconciled to the Lord's late dispensation in taking her amiable daughter to himself in the morning of life. If you could but see into futurity, you would undoubtedly acknowledge the goodness of God to her and yourself herein. It is certainly matter of joy, especially when we consider that she was arrived to those years that would expose her to grievous temptations, that the Lord was pleased so soon to translate her out of a world of sin, and misery,

misery, into the kingdom of his dear son. However, I must own, that her death will be a great loss to you, but I trust it will be made up, and prove your gain, by the Lord's giving you himself. That she died in the Lord, there is no room to doubt, therefore we may reasonably suppose that she is safely lodg'd in his garner. Into which happy mansion, may an abundant entrance be administered to

My dear sister, and
her very affectionate brother,

Written at Sea, *June* 12, 1762.

To Miss G — G —.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE endearments of a friendship founded upon divine love, and the conversation and company of such an intimate relation, must be acknowledged among the most refined and eligible temporal enjoyments of a Christian; especially as it bears so near a resemblance to those pleasures we hope to participate, the spirits of just men made perfect. For which reason, my present situation cannot but be grievous, and would indeed be insupportably so, if divine grace had not in some measure subjected my will to God, and influenced me to a degree of resignation; and I desire to be thankful, that while an interposing ocean rolls, nothing need prevent our frequent meetings at the throne, as also that there is a means whereby we may yet convey our

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sentiments,

sentiments, and relate whatsoever is material, to each other. On mine own part, I believe the minutest thought, or most trivial concern relating to my friend can never be indifferent to me, being no less confident of an affection on your side, productive of the same tenderness. I not only comply in keeping a journal which I intend to convey to you ; but have now added some of my musing thoughts, while I pass solitary and forlorn upon the restless seas.

I could not but reflect, that a voyage was the fittest emblem of the life of man of any thing that I had ever observed. Methought the vessels first sailing out of the harbour and launching upon the wide extended main, might be well compared to our entrance upon the stage of life ; and that the continual fluctuations of that unsettled element strongly represent the uncertain state of all sublunary things. But, O ! I cannot say that the general conduct of mankind (in the only affair of importance) continues the comparison : For alas ! the good sea-man no sooner begins the voyage, than he directs his continual course towards, and fixes his pleasing hopes upon, the intended harbour : He spares no pains by day or night, is ever on the watch, nor murmurs at the ceaseless toil, if haply he may gain the port at last. But O ! how seldom do the thoughtless sons of men consider to what end they were created, and how they shall best attain thereto ! As if they imagined there were no rest remaining for the soul of man, or that the voyage of life would ne'er be o'er. Otherwise they would not suffer their little bark to be tost on every wave, or driven by every wind of chance, while they
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supinely slumber on the unfathomable deep, and dream that they shall safe arrive at last. O dreadful error! nor less dreadful than prevalent! May that spirit who has graciously awakened my dear friend, and by whose kindly operation my soul has been alike benefited, continually keep us on our guard; that escaping all the rocks, quicksands, snares, and traps, that may be laid for our feet, we may at last land safely, where toil, and grief, and pain shall cease, and our freed souls enjoy perpetual peace! Into those thrice happy mansions, may an abundant admittance be administered to

MY DEAR FRIEND,

And her's most affectionately,

M. L.



Jan. 9, 1765.

To the same.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

IT is impossible for a heart influenced with sentiments of friendship, warm as mine to you, not to participate in all that concerns the object of that sacred union: Nor can there be a pretence of it's existence, if not productive of the tenderest sympathy; nor where it does not mingle interests, and call each other's joys and griefs, it's own. This, my dear love, is it's real effects in mine; and if my conduct has at any time exprest the contrary, the error has proceeded from weakness and inattention, not from the dictates of my heart; which, variable as it is, can upon the strictest scrutiny affirm it loves you, with a constant, tender, and unalterable affection. I

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cannot therefore be insensible of the emotions of my dear friend's mind, occasioned by the important task enjoined of watching over, and building up a part of Jesus' flock. It ought indeed my love, to be a very prevailing incitement to our own upright and close walking with God, because it is only in his light, we can see light; and we shall have need of this, as well to comprehend the states of the people, as to know in what manner to administer reproof, exhortation, or consolation, as occasion shall offer; for it is really a great thing to speak for eternity, and they must be wise, that would win souls. We may then well say, who is sufficient for these things? Blessed be the love that has taught us, that we are not, and who at the same time gives us to feel, that our sufficiency is of him; and that tho' we are not able of ourselves to do any thing, yet, that through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things.

I cannot but rejoice at the diffidence that appears in my dearest love, while I can assure her, my heart sympathizes in the pain it occasions: But it is profitable, as every thing must be, that makes us more recumbent upon Jesus. Happy is the soul, who perceiving it's own nothingness, finds in Christ it's all in all. I find no words expressive of the ardent wishes of my soul, that my dearest dear friend might increase in every blessing, in every grace, that can create a source of continual joy in her own breast, render her useful to the church of God, and acceptable in his sight through Christ Jesus.

WHAT I have often exprest to my dearest love, I again beg leave to repeat, that I esteem
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it one of the most indulgent providences that has occurred in my whole life, that has united us in so intire, and I trust indissoluble a bond of friendship; and tho' I confess that this, as every earthly satisfaction has its alloys; yet I would not forego the happiness it affords for any temporal consideration. As often as I thank my God on this behalf, so often do I implore, that he will continue it to the end of my invaluable life; which from the weakness of my constitution, I am frequently led to believe, will not run parallel with my dearest friends; but herein I bless God, my will submits; every other desire being absorb'd in this. "O! let me live, and die to thee," my God, and being by divine mercy possess'd of an hope full of immortality, I view the dreary valley with comfort and delight.

"For all is calm in that eternal sleep,
"There griefs forget to groan, and love to weep."

But tho' every tear shall then be wiped from mine eyes, yet if any thing besides uncreated excellence may be an object of affection, it will most certainly be the friend, that is at present as dear as mine own soul, and to whom, I as earnestly wish an abundant admittance into these realms of joy, as I do to, my dearest love,

Your's in the most lasting bonds,

M. L.





Jan. 1768.

To Mrs. F—. P—.

DEAR SISTER,

I Should much sooner have convinced you that not any change of situation, or new engagement in life, would ever make me negligent in writing to one for whom I bear the sincerest affection, and whom I am always glad to hear from; but divine providence, all whose dispensations must needs be equal, wise, and good, has engrossed my attention by an awful circumstance, which (since my last) has happened in our family, and in which I am sure you will very tenderly sympathize, when I inform you, that the truly amiable Miss P— G— (from whose bright genius and early piety, the most sanguine expectations might have been indulged) is no more an inhabitant of these dusky regions, but has bid eternally farewell to all the vicissitudes of this fluctuating state, and is now entered into those joys that neither change nor period know. The grisly monarch's harbinger was a putrid fever, which, as soon as it seized her tender frame, brought on an uncommon stupor, a profound deafness, and for some days before her departure sealed up in silence those lips, from which I believe I may assert never proceeded any thing but innocence and truth, and with which she was first enabled to witness a good confession, and to leave her friends the most satisfactory testimony of her future bliss. She was interred in that church where she so lately attended me as a bride-

bride-maid; a silent but pathetic monitor of the short duration, and certain period of all human events! O may my heart be open to it's instructive voice!

My dear friend sends her love to you, and accept the same from

DEAR SISTER,

Your's affectionately,

M. G.



Jan. 23, 1768.

To Mrs. M— F—.

DEAR SISTER F—.

PERHAPS ere this you begin to think me capable of neglecting, if not forgetting mine old friends. It is true, I have been long silent, but can assure you, necessity has enforced the omission; and when I acquaint you with the sad cause, I have no doubt but you will excuse the delay, and very tenderly sympathize with me and our afflicted family, who are under the trying dispensation of having lost from amongst us, a most amiable and endeared relation Miss P— G—, aged 17, who was taken from our society in this dreary vale on *Thursday* last, by a putrid fever, which, from it's first approach, resisted all the force of medicine, and cruelly eluded the incessant care of her anxious friends. She was attended twice a day from the beginning to it's fatal period, by two of the most eminent physicians of this place, and an apothecary; but the destined hour was come, when she was to attain

a dispensation from every mortal woe, be admitted to unite with the spirits of just men made perfect; and we who still remain thus to be admonished of our own approaching change, and of the uncertainty of sublunary things. She was a blooming flower, but alas! how has the grisly tyrant's sickle levelled her with the dust!

BEFORE she died, she gave a clear testimony of Jesus' power to save. Some of her words were, "I have found Christ, and have power to love God, because I know he has first loved me; I am entirely delivered from the fear of death, and quite resigned to the divine disposal." All her conduct proved the efficacy of what she professed; for, amidst severe sufferings, there was nothing to be discerned, but steadfast patience and calm composedness even to the last. Great, unspeakably great, is the loss of all that were interested in this jewel!

LET us unite our prayers that infinite goodness may support them under it, and may it not only be our wish to die the death of the righteous, but our constant endeavour to provide for that important hour, when to be found ready to participate the joy of our Lord, must be the highest felicity and cordial to the fainting spirits! May divine grace administer it in that time of need to my dear sister, and her

affectionate friend,

M— G—,



March



March, 1768.

MY DEAR MADAM,

THAT affectionate respect for you and the whole family, which I believe, notwithstanding the mutability of the human heart, can never be erased from mine, renders it impossible for me not to be very sensibly affected at the apprehension of having irretrievably engaged in an affair which has met with your disapprobation, and I fear incurred your displeasure; under which uncomfortable circumstance my chief support is the reflection of having enter'd upon it with all seriousness, much prayer, and the clearest proofs of acting in conformity to the divine will, which I think I may appeal to the inspector of the most secret springs from whence our actions flow, and say, I did then, and still do, desire may be the sole rule of all my conduct while I sojourn in this dreary vale. A sense of mine own unworthiness frequently made me anticipate the consequences of my dear Mr. F—'s making such a choice; but as it had pleased the Lord to incline the hearts of some of his friends so chearfully, and to me, so unexpectedly to acquiesce, I know not how the same indulgent power might influence your's, which if it had been in my favour, would have been acknowledged with those sentiments of gratitude that such a condescension ought to have effected; though the painful disappointment will, I trust, never obliterate from my memory the many obligations which your repeated and affectionate favours have from time to time conferred upon me.

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I must acknowledge the charge of imprudence; but should be much more condemned in mine own conscience, had my confidence been placed in a golden mine, instead of relying upon him whose is the earth and the fulness thereof: And though from the partiality of mine heart to Mr. F—, I have reason to believe I should never have given my hand but to him; yet if I ever had, I should not have been bias'd by what was always in my esteem of the smallest consideration. I desire with humility and gratitude to assert, that by grace I am as able as ever to cast my care upon my never-failing friend; and to encourage myself in the Lord, believing that he would have interpos'd on our behalf in so important an affair, had it been contrary to his will, and it's consequences repugnant to our happiness; or if in this transitory life it should increase our momentary afflictions; that by a due improvement of every dispensation, we shall be the more fitted for that eternal weight of glory, which I trust will be our mutual lot when we fall upon earth, and have no more a portion in any thing that is done under the sun.

THAT the present life is ever attended with vicissitudes, that the state of mortals is subject to sudden and perpetual change, we have within a few months experienced some of the most striking instances, as our late letters have inform'd you. Very short was the interval betwixt those solemnities that (on account of the valuable purposes for which they were instituted, as also for their being typical of that union of Christ with his church, from whence she derives her choicest comforts and most animating hopes,) are with propriety

propriety esteemed joyous, and that afflictive circumstance which was the subject of more awful ceremonies. May the instructive lesson which such occurrences are calculated to enforce, never be erased from my heart by all the engagements of a transitory life! I have often reflected with the tenderest sympathy on the part my dear sister must bear in the interesting scene. I trust she has happily experienced the efficacy of that grace, aided by which, frail mortality is enabled to weather all the storms of adverse life, and by an entire submission to the divine will ever to rejoice in tribulation, relying as fully upon infinite goodness when under the rod, as when his love is manifested by the most indulgent providences; knowing that what is most contrary to nature, and would be the farthest from our choice, may, of all other things, be the most productive of our real happiness.

It is certain, that from the late dispensation, much solid comfort may be deduced, especially upon reflecting on the vast advantage of your dear departed child; who, notwithstanding her short abode in this inhospitable clime, the purity of her sentiments and exemption from care, was not altogether unassaulted by the enemy of her soul, and consequently not wholly free from impediments to her happiness; but now she is superior to all, wearing the victorious palm, and partaking of those joys which can no period find. O! how is every virtue improved, every bud of grace matur'd by her translation! may the comfortable consideration suspend your griefs, and tune your heart to praise! You have also a further alleviation in being still possessed of affectionate children, that
promise

promise to prove satisfactory to yourself, and ornamental to the church; a fair prospect of which may be discerned in Miss A— in particular, who since the death of her dear sister, has been deeply serious, and studiously attentive to every profitable exercise. She with the others are well, and send their duty to their Papa and yourself. Please to present my affectionate respects to Mr. N—, who with yourself, I sincerely wish may experience the salutary effects of every dispensation, and at last obtain a portion of that felicity, which eye hath not seen, ear heard, nor the capacious heart of man conceived, but which God hath reserved for all that love the dear Immanuel; among which happy few, may my dear sister be numbered, as also her

Truly affectionate,

M. F.



June 19, 1766.

To Mrs. E. G.

My very dear MADAM,

TH O' I am fully persuaded that every thing shall work together for good to them that fear God; and tho' the trouble of such be ever so numerous, and out of them all, will the Lord (their sympathizing friend) deliver them; yet I was greatly pained that the accounts we were obliged to give of Miss —, should come at a time, when it pleased God to be exercising your faith and patience in other respects. She and the others are all well at present, and I have not the least doubt, but that your prayers will be answered

ed on their behalf, for God will fulfil the desires of them that fear him; and he assures us, that his ears are open to their cries. May the animating consideration of the extensiveness of the promises, and the faithfulness and love of God, sooth every tumultuous care, and constantly support my honoured friend, and the much respected partner of her every concern, to whom I cannot doubt but God will soon, very soon, impart that peace which this inhospitable world can neither give nor take away. That the present enjoyment of this, with that unfathomable reversion of glorious bliss, may compensate every waiting trying hour, is the sincere prayer of,

Dear Madam,

Your's affectionately,

M. L.



To Mrs. M. H.

Jan. 14, 1766.

My dear SISTER,

I HAVE sent you two letters since I have been in C—, and had not intended to write again 'till I heard from you, imagining my subject was not so agreeable as I could wish. But the late melancholy event occasions me to break thro' my intended silence, to assure my dear sister I was not unaffected with the grief she must necessarily have felt, when the unwelcome news reached you. I should myself have been much afflicted at the death of so amiable a boy, and so nearly related to me, were not my views extend-

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ed beyond this transitory scene, and my thoughts exceedingly engrossed with the vast and amazing advantage, which the immortal part has gained by the dissolution of it's earthly tabernacle. That he is now above all human comprehension happy, is beyond a doubt? And what situation in life, could have compensated the hazard of that bliss he now enjoys. Alas! when we reflect upon those words, which are uttered by an unerring judge, that the way to the kingdom is narrow, and that few find it! and also consider how opposite the customs and manners of this present world, are to the rules of the gospel, how averse the heart of man is to good, and prone to ill; how should we exult in the particular privilege of those who are lodged safe, and have won the prize, without entering upon the doubtful and important combat! I hope some such sentiments have already alleviated the grief, which so unexpected a stroke of providence must have created at first. Let my dear sister add thereto, the profitable thought of the shortness and uncertainty of her own time, and in how small a space, she must quit this vale, and leave all that is dear to her on earth behind; and if you have happily insured your own salvation, you shall meet your dear babe, where parting is no more. Poor Miss H—, truly sympathised in your affliction; she could not have grieved more, if he had been her own and only son. I believe nothing, but a degree of that sovereign balm, true religion, supported her under it. May it take place in my dear sister's heart, and then you will sweetly prove, that it abates the force of all temporal occurrences, by deeply impressing on the thoughtful mind, those things that are eternal. That God may sanctify every

every dispensation, by causing it to advance your spiritual and everlasting felicity, is the most ardent wish of,

My dear sister,

Your's affectionately,

G—.



To Mrs. M— H—. On the Death of her Husband.

May 27, 1766.

IT has not been long since I wrote my dear sister a letter upon the affecting subject of condolance, for the loss of her dear babe, little expecting to be so soon engaged in the same unpleasant task, and that upon an occasion, if not more tender, yet certainly far more important, upon many accounts. What shall I say upon so overwhelming a circumstance? That my heart tenderly sympathizes in your afflictions; yes, my dear sister, and I have endeavoured in the best manner that I could, to bring it to the throne, whence issues every comfort, every aid afflicted mortals need. From that inexhaustible fund I trust you have (in that tremendous period) received support, greater than you could possibly have expected. He has and will spread beneath you his everlasting arms, and many are the gracious promises that belong to your present state, if you will now chuse the Lord for your friend, who will certainly fulfil them to your unspeakable joy.

IN this state of imperfection, we are but too apt to conclude, that favourable dispensations,

and pleasing occurrences, are the only way in which God manifests his goodness and love to us; but if we consider how great a power is exerted to sustain us under trials, and observe how cautiously and tenderly he deals the blow, (and especially if we patiently wait and obediently concur in the intent for which he permits our sufferings,) we shall be obliged to own that in the midst of wrath, his mercy's beams appear, and that chastisements from his sovereign hand are blessings in disguise. Such I sincerely wish this may prove to yourself, and to all that are interested in the melancholy event. I have hopes that you will now indulge the religious turn of mind which has been perceivable in you from your youth, and that you will not be content with a shadow of it, but earnestly contend for that divine transforming principle, which when enjoyed, will calm all the tumults of the troubled breast.

O my sister! suffer not yourself to be led away by the counsel of worldly friends to a contrary conduct, expecting to find relief in any thing which earth is capable of affording; for all is momentary, every thing beneath the sun is empty, is insufficient to abate the sorrows of the mind, or to yield that bliss for which an immortal spirit gasps, and which it will ever pine for, 'till it drinks of those pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore: A foretaste of which is our certain privilege below, and a preparation for, and pledge of full draughts above. May this sovereign balm alleviate every woe which attends on human life, and greatly heighten every pleasing scene, and prove the eternal portion of, My dear sister, and her affectionate,

G—
To

To Mrs. E— B—.

May 27, 1766.

DEAR SISTER,

I Received my dear sister's favour of *January* 10, and was extremely concerned to hear of the poor state of health you had laboured under, as also of Mr. B—'s great indisposition, though it did not (as it might) prepare me for the melancholy news of his dissolution, which exceedingly shock'd and concerned me; though I trust there was hope in his end; that his family's loss has proved his gain, which I shall greatly rejoice to hear as soon as my dear sister can indulge me with a letter. I doubt not but that the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, was eminently present with you by his assisting grace and timely aid in the needful season, and that he will according to his word be a husband to you, and your children's sure and lasting friend. There is a privilege which we can scarce discern in being stript of all but God.

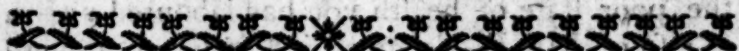
You have already received one token of divine goodness in detaining my brother and sister in A——, whose absence would have greatly augmented your distress; and O! with gratitude trace all his other gracious dispensations! May the Lord make you a widow indeed; trusting in him, and continuing in prayer night and day! Death has made an inroad into our family, and God only knows where his pointed shafts will end. I am much afraid that poor sister B— will not conti-

nue long: She has been in a bad state of health some time, and grows worse and worse. My friend joins me in love to yourself, and my sister G—, and I remain, with the tenderest sympathy and ardent wishes for your happiness,

My dear SISTER,

Your's affectionately,

G—



To Mrs. M— H—.

Sept. 10, 1766.

MY DEAR SISTER,

IT gives me no small pleasure to find by my sister G—'s letter to P—, that you are convinced of the truth of the gospel, and also desirous to be devoted to God, both in body and soul: May the Lord Jesus strengthen your every good resolution, and enable you to lay aside every weight, with the sin which most easily be-fets you, that you may run with patience the race that is set before you, looking to Jesus the author and finisher of faith: Wherefore be determined to break off every acquaintance that will in any degree retard your progress towards *Sion's* hill. No doubt but you have been persuaded by many to divert the melancholy, which the late incident must necessarily have occasioned, by going into company; but listen not, my dear sister, to such pernicious advice, lest the Lord should again take the rod in his hand, and shew his displeasure by bereaving you of your other two darlings, W— and G—; for be assured, the
Lord

Lord has not afflicted you, because he delights to grieve his creatures. No, his will is our happiness, and his chastisements are love in disguise, being only designed to render us partakers of his holiness. O that you may discern the rod, and to what end it is appointed, that the gracious design being answered, he may henceforward deal only in merciful and indulgent dispensations, so that your future days may be compleatly happy, and your end peace.

GOD may be compared to a wise and good parent; who, as long as children are stubborn and refractory, is obliged to correct; but as soon as submission and obedience take place, is as willing and ready to supply all their necessities, and to gratify all their reasonable desires. Upon the whole, I rejoice in the pleasing hope that my dear sister will be enabled to say with the royal Psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." This however is certain, that you are set at entire liberty, and may now serve the Lord agreeable to your conscience without restraint; and be thankful there is good reason to believe that the Lord was gracious to Mr. H—, in whose end there was hope.

PLEASE to give a kiss for me to each of your little ones, for whose preservation and improvement in grace, and all the happiness that can result from that or any other source of lasting comfort, the throne of grace is constantly invoked by,

DEAR SISTER,

Your's affectionately,

G—.

To



To the same.

Sept. 30, 1766.

MY DEAR SISTER,

AS there will probably be but few more opportunities of writing to *A*—— this year, I would not omit that which now offers, to acknowledge the receipt of your's of *July* the 20th, which fail'd not of giving the usual satisfaction, though it's subject is melancholy, and could not but sensibly affect one who so tenderly sympathizes in every thing that concerns you. But as my dear sister has reason to praise him who supported her under the oppressive dispensation, she ought no less to trust and believe, that the affliction is by heaven designed, "to work out for her
" a far more exceeding and eternal weight of
" glory;" and that the gracious design may not be frustrated, she will, I hope, devote her future days to the one great business of life, that of seeking, insuring, and preserving the favour of God.

I doubt not but the late stroke has been more convincing than a thousand arguments, that nothing is worthy of a mortal's wish or endeavour, but to gain that important point: For all our pleasures here, as they are fading, are no less dangerous and if they yield a momentary joy, the pleasing reflection is often embitter'd by the grief occasioned by their deprivation. I am glad you experienced the efficacy of prayer, and hope it will be a means of encouraging you in that duty to which so many promises are annexed.

Your

Your determination of having your conviction of those things that concern your peace from the scriptures is certainly laudable. May the same spirit that dictated the sacred pages assist your enquiries. But it is certain, that the writings of good men have frequently thrown a light upon them, which has proved beneficial to those who have not had either leisure or inclination to apply themselves to that best of studies.

ADIEU! my dear sister. May the holy spirit lead and guide you in the narrow path, and at last bring you to those eternal mansions which he is preparing for the blest; among which happy number you will, I trust, be found, and

Your affectionate sister,

G—.



DEAR MISS,

MY friend informed me, that after conversing with Mrs. G— and myself upon religion, and hearing us affirm that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is the only term of reconciliation with God, and final salvation, you professed to be greatly surprized that we should at all insist upon good works, and was very desirous to know, how we could prove the necessity of them, if as we assert, we are saved by faith only. I trust my dear Miss, that this difficulty will soon be obviated, and these seeming opposites harmonized by having recourse to the law and the testimony. Godliness is indeed a mystery! It is no wonder then, that erring mortals are frequently (as *David*

was

was) obliged to go into the sanctuary to have their judgments informed, and their doubts resolved. That we are justified by grace thro' faith, and not by the deeds of the law, is evident from the whole tenor of scripture; and, to the soul that is made sensible of it's own incapacity to do any thing well pleasing to God, it is as our church observes a most wholesome doctrine, and full of much consolation. Yet we are so far from excluding good works, that we believe them absolutely necessary; for before we can believe, we must repent, and bring forth works meet for repentance, as we learn from the 11th, and some following verses of the 3d chapter of St. *Luke*, where *John the Baptist* teaches returning sinners to lay aside every known sin, and to practice the contrary duty; but so far was he from desiring them to rest there, that we find the same messenger of God, in the 36th verse of the 1st chapter of St. *John's* gospel, exhorting them to behold the lamb of God, who only could take away their sins.

WHEN we come to a knowledge of salvation, thro' the forgiveness of sins, by believing in Jesus Christ, we must also maintain good works; for St. *James* tells us in the 22d. verse of the 2d chap. of his epistle, that faith is hereby perfected; and our blessed Lord himself declares in the 17th verse of the 5th chap. of St. *Matthew*, that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; that is, not to give us a dispensation from it, but power to obey it in it's utmost extent and spirituality; else, what need that explanation and enlargement of it, which he gives us in the following verses, if instead of being observed, it had been abolished. Speaking to his disciples in the 15th verse of the

14th

14th chap. of *St. John's* gospel, he says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" and it is impossible to believe in the blessed Jesus with that faith that justifies the ungodly, and not to love him, as himself testifies of the woman, whose sins he pardon'd in the Pharisee's house; she loved much, because she had much forgiven. *St. Paul* speaking of the great privileges of a person, who thro' justification by faith in Jesus Christ, has peace with God; adds also, that the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is then given to them; and this love of God constraineth us to universal obedience. It is an enlivening powerful principle, prompting us to all such things, as are pleasing in his sight. Thus, tho' good works are not the meritorious cause of our obtaining, or continuing in the favour of God, yet they are the necessary effects of earnestly seeking, and constantly abiding therein; and every believer experiences the truth of that assertion, that his commandments are not grievous; so far from it, that they value it as no small part of their happiness, that they are privileged to obey them. I trust, my dear Miss, that from these broken hints, you will discern some agreement between the doctrine of justification by faith, and the propriety of being zealous of good works, and that you may both understand and experience all those sublime heights of joy, that ever result from obedient faith, is the sincere prayer of,

Your's affectionately,

M. L.



SIR,



S I R,

WHEN I consider mine own inability to express myself in a suitable manner, upon the momentous subject of religion, I am often led to adore that infinite goodness, that has given to every individual a capacity to experience, what so very few are able to define; and that for our encouragement under the disadvantage of such imperfection, has informed us that the kingdom of God consists not in words, but in saving power. Nevertheless, as there is a promise imply'd in every command, so undoubtedly there is in that, by which we are indispensably bound to be ready to give an answer, whenever we are interrogated concerning the hope that is in us; trusting therefore in his aid, who is made unto us wisdom, as well as righteousness, &c. I proceed to endeavour, in compliance with your request, to explain my sentiments more fully upon the nature of that salvation, which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ wrought out for mankind, by his merits and death; and freely to assert, what I think, is the privilege of a christian to experience in the present life.

WITH regard to the first proposition, my ideas are boundless, exceeding the limits of the most expressive words; and I can only say, that I believe in it is comprised a restorative, for all those unfathomable depths of misery, in which sin hath involved the human race, and abundantly more.

DID divine complacency smile with approbation, and thereby crown every other blessing which
his

his liberal hand bestowed upon our first parent, and the divine image shine bright upon his happy soul? Had he communion with the father and his son Christ Jesus, thro' the eternal spirit, and a fair prospect of perpetual and improved felicity? This we know is the received opinion, and revealed account of man's primæval state; and these the heights of bliss, from which sin hath so far removed the fallen race. The impotency of our nature, and the irreconcilableness of the divine law once transgressed, rendered it as impossible for us to regain these blessings, by any wisdom, or might of our own, as it is for us to direct the course of the heavenly luminaries, or to restrain the impetuous winds. But tho' with men it was impossible, yet nothing was too hard for Jesus, the mighty Lord of all, whose wisdom, power, and love, hath effected the wondrous work. He hath by the shedding of his precious blood, recovered for us all that holiness and happiness, which we were dispossessed of by the sin of *Adam*, with that reversion of joys, that was in due time to have rewarded his unremitted obedience, in the kingdom of heaven. God for the merits and sufferings of his beloved son, hath condescended to enter again into covenant with the children of men, and that upon conditions more suitable to the debility of human nature; it not being now, do this and live, but believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. And even that faith which is made the terms of salvation, is his gift; so that we may truly say, he gives what he requires, and freely saves his own. O what stupendous love! Therefore, whosoever now believes, is justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of works,

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are reinstated in the divine favour, and have that change begun in their hearts, which, if they persevere, will terminate in the intire sanctification of their nature, and renewing them in the image of God, in which they were originally created. All which, undoubtedly, must be experienced in the present life, because it is inconsistent with reason, and the word of God, that we should enter into his eternal kingdom without it; for nothing that is defiled, must tread those heavenly streets. With the prophet *Amos* it seemed improbable, that two should walk together except they be agreed; how much more so, for two to dwell together without that agreement. It cannot be; for the wise man assures us, as the tree falls so it lies. And the fountain, from whence all wisdom is derived, even Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for evermore, has inform'd us "That if we die in our sins, where he is we cannot come, and that except we are born again, we shall not see the kingdom of heaven." The change which is herein imply'd, (and which whosoever has passed thro', is as conscious of, as of the shining of the sun at it's meridian,) is wrought upon the soul, by the holy spirit of God. Wherefore, that faith which is instrumental in re-uniting us to God, and making us partakers of the divine nature, is said to be of the operation of his spirit; and there surely never was a more fatal mistake, than the generally received opinion, that faith implies nothing more, than an assent to divine truths. Perhaps if this did not so universally prevail, so many reasonable beings would not remain supinely negligent, while the vast concerns of their eternal state, are all in the most dreadful uncertainty. A due consideration, that
they

they are neither born believers in the scriptural sense, nor made such by baptism, or their religious profession be it ever so orthodox; nor what would appear to them still more amazing, that their being "re-baptized by reason when adult," does not bring them into the liberty of the children of God.

I say, a conviction of this interesting truth, would in all probability rouse souls immortal from that lethargy of inconsistent ease, and delusive peace, which expose them to be devoured by that roaring lion, who incessantly goeth about to make mankind his prey. Therefore he is most solicitous to prevent their discerning the true nature, and properties of faith, which occasions persons to take a shadow for that substance of things hoped for, and to imagine that all the benefits of Christ's passion, and all the great and precious promises of the gospel are transferred to them, by a notion floating in the brain, instead of that divine conviction, "That Christ loved me, and gave himself for me," which fills the soul with inexplicable delight, proves an anchor sure and steadfast, amidst the waves and storms of adverse life, and capacitates feeble mortals to triumph o'er the mouldering tomb, and so purifies the heart from its depravity, and renews us in true holiness, as to render us meet for an inheritance with the saints in light; in which is comprized those ineffable joys, which eye hath not seen, ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive; but which I trust thro' grace, will be the satisfactory, and eternal portion of you Sir, and your humble servant,

M. L.



March 8, 1767.

To a late eminent physician.

SIR,

THE impropriety of modern customs, renders it very uncommon, and extremely unpolite for mortal beings, tho' posting to an unalterable state of existence, so much as to mention the importance of that change, much less to counsel and advise each other, to give all diligence to secure a perpetuity of felicity; and what is more surprizing, this prevails even when we see our friends just entering upon the amazing scene. Surely, in this mistaken complaisance, we act no more like reasonable creatures, than like persons favoured with a divine revelation, which abounds with persuasions and incitements to these labours of sublime charity. As I have a long time deviated from such maxims, (as I desire to do from every thing derogatory to mine own or other's eternal interests) I hope this will plead my excuse for the freedom I now take; as the profession in which you were engaged, and which I have reason to believe you practised conscientiously, and with judgment, rendered your life valuable; I was exceedingly concerned when I was informed that you laboured under a dangerous disorder, and was very solicitous to hear of your recovery, but have lately been told, that there remained very little or no hope of it; in which case, Sir, if your immortal spirit is prepared to appear before it's divine original, your situation is rather to be congratulated than deplored, and I am persuaded
you

you will not then esteem it an intrusion, if a philanthropos endeavours to aid your meditation on that pleasing scene, which is just opening to your view. It cannot then be disagreeable to you, to hear of that rest that remaineth to the children of God, when all the toils and pains of life shall find a period; or of that ineffable bliss which that approbatory sentence, "Well done, good and faithful servant, &c." will afford to your enraptured spirit, in those regions of unmixed delights. And if on the sad reverse, you feel a consciousness that your eternal concerns are not thus happily adjusted, so that you have grace to get, instead of grace to use, in the needful time of languishment; you will excuse me, if having mine own self known the terrors of the Lord, I urge you to improve the few remaining sands, the lingring moments which mercy lends, in the all important work: And if I endeavour to point out the requisites, to make our title to glory sure, I hope, as they come from a sincere heart, aided I trust, with the authority of scripture, tho' from a very insufficient pen, they will be considered with a candor intirely free from prejudice. I apprehend, Sir, then, that it is first very necessary, that we should be well acquainted with ourselves, according to Dr. *Young's* sentiments, all knowledge centres there. To know ourselves, implies a consciousness of our fallen state, and of the many actual transgressions, whereby we have incensed the divine majesty: This leads to humility and repentance, which needs not to be repented of; and to a sense of our need of Jesus, seeing he was so call'd, because he alone was to save his people from their sins, and that there is no

other name whereby we may receive life and salvation, but the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

WE must avoid depending upon any thing for acceptance with God, but faith in the atonement which he hath made by himself once offered; for it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, or can do, that we are saved, but through that faith, which is not a bare assent to scripture truths, but of the operation of the holy spirit: When this is wrought in the soul, we are as our Saviour terms it, "Born again;" have a knowledge of the pardon of sin, and the love of God is then shed abroad in the heart, and the privileges of this state are beautifully described in the 5th chap. of *St. Paul* to the *Rom.* 'Tis this, Sir, that draws the sting of death, disarms that monster of all those grisly horrors, without which he cannot otherwise be viewed; and enables us, when on the confines of eternity, to triumph o'er the mould'ring tomb. It is true, it is our duty, glory, and gain, to live in the enjoyment of this happy state, and in the improvement of so great a privilege, by growing in grace; so that being compleat in holiness, we might come to the grave like a shock of ripe corn. But yet by the indulgence of infinite mercy, if we have neglected our true interest 'till the eleventh hour, there is hope of acceptance upon a diligent application to that God who is rich in mercy. May that indulgent power, in whatsoever state his all penetrating eyes now behold you, supply all that is deficient, alleviate by his divine influence each mortal pain, and bring to that thrice blessed place, where sin, with all it's attendant miseries, shall be intirely annihilated,

annihilated, you Sir,
 And your sincere well-wisher,
 And humble servant,

M. L.



SIR,

I HAVE read with pleasure the letters you intend for the press, and I really think they might, and will prove efficacious to every condition, according to your preface, if they are read with attention and a desire to profit. Yet I wish something more had been said on sanctification, a thing that is of the utmost consequence, and not much understood even by professors, and therefore not only opposed but abhorred by them. I mean that measure of it, which denotes deliverance from sin; tho' no more is imply'd therein, than what many of the good old puritans contended for, both in their preaching and writings. Wherefore I have extracted a great part of a six-penny pamphlet, intitled, *A Treatise on Christian Perfection*, which I send you with a few of my thoughts upon it, as it is a doctrine I am as fully convinced of the truth of, as I am that Jesus Christ tasted death for me; and if you think they might be of any service to the public, or will be an embellishment to the work, you have my consent to add to your number by inserting this. It is strange, that well-meaning people should imbibe a prejudice against any expression, or point of doctrine that frequently occurs, and is much enforced in God's sacred book. That they do, is too true, and much to be lamented.

mented. What is more denied, opposed, and frights people, than the doctrine of perfection, tho' taught by Christ himself, *Mat. v. 48.* his servants the prophets, *Gen. xvii. 1. Deut. xxx. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. 27.* and the apostles. Indeed the new testament is full, not only of the doctrine, but of the term perfection, and of this latter so is the old; and yet many who would be thought to reverence the bible, are offended at the sound of it. But if the tenet be not scriptural, I would ask, for what end did Christ die, rise again, and was exalted to give repentance, and the remission of sins, were it not for that, inasmuch as without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Now what is meant by christian perfection, is nothing more than that holiness which is necessary to see God, or to qualify us for glory. I am well acquainted with the author of that little tract, and have heard him frequently say, that he intended nothing more by writing on that topick, and giving it that title, than to set forth the doctrine in it's own simple colours, which many have disfigured, and at which most religious people are disgusted; that they may see plainly there is no more meant by the term, than what is agreeable to scripture and sound reason; that being convinced of this, the disciples of Christ who believe the same things, (and it is very probable the discord among sincere Christians upon this head, is more about the shadow than the substance, about expressions than the matter they contain,) might not fall out by the way about words, but all strive for the mastery, "and press towards the mark for the prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Otherwise I am persuaded he would have given it another title, as I know he

is more attach'd to truth, than any mode of speech.

‘ By Christian perfection (says my author) I mean neither the absolute perfection of God, nor the perfection of angels, nor the perfection of *Adam* in his innocent state. Neither do I mean such a perfection as excludes a growing in grace, whilst we are upon earth; as I do not believe there is such a state to be attained even in heaven as to exclude a growing in the knowledge and love of God. For I imagine that angels as well as the spirits of just men made perfect, will be improving to all eternity. To suppose them incapable of growing, by reason they can know no more of God, nor love him better than they do, would be to make them as God, who alone cannot know more than he does, nor be greater than he is. And perhaps this will be one part of our happiness in heaven, the having fresh discoveries of God, in all his attributes, through the endless ages of eternity.

‘ BUT what I mean by Christian perfection is the arriving to that degree of faith, or that state of union with Christ, wherein all evil tempers and desires, together with all opposition to the will of God, are done away, and all that is in us becomes holiness unto the Lord: Or, it is the loving God with all the heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves, according to our present capacity. And to love God with all the heart, &c. implies the loving him with all the powers of the soul; which will put us
‘ upon

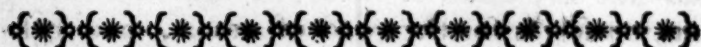
' upon serving him with all the faculties of the
 ' body ; and must certainly mean a being loose
 ' from all creatures, persons, and things, and
 ' being so dead to them, as to be ready to sa-
 ' crifice any or all of them when they stand be-
 ' tween God and the soul, or are any hinderance
 ' to the loving him more, and serving him better ;
 ' or would cause us in any wise to sin and grieve
 ' his holy spirit, or prevent our cleaving to him
 ' with full purpose of heart, and so hinder his
 ' reigning there without a rival. It also im-
 ' plies a depending upon him only, having no
 ' confidence in ourselves, persons, nor means,
 ' for any spiritual or temporal blessing ; nor for
 ' deliverance from any spiritual or temporal
 ' evil ; a looking constantly to God for a con-
 ' tinuance of his favour, for a supply of grace,
 ' for such temporal things as he sees best, and
 ' for freedom from all that is hurtful to the
 ' soul. Thus living by faith, the Christian fears
 ' nothing, but to offend God, for he knows God
 ' is on his side, that his holy angels surround
 ' and guard him, and that nothing shall happen
 ' to him, but what shall be for his good. He
 ' desires nothing but the will of God ; for hav-
 ' ing God and Christ, and all things in them,
 ' he has all he wants, and cannot have more
 ' than he has already, unless it be more of Christ.
 ' Thus perfect love casts out all evil fear and
 ' desire, making the soul that enjoys it, to de-
 ' light in the whole will of God, in all his
 ' ordinances, and providences, and in the cross
 ' of Christ ; it causes him to be always think-
 ' ing and speaking of God, and of spiritual
 ' things, and of other things only as they have
 ' a tendency to his glory ; for the soul is wrapt
 ' up

' up and lost in God and Christ. And as the
 ' Christian that is thus devoted to God fears no-
 ' thing, desires nothing, and is careful for nothing,
 ' but how he shall please God; so does he *rejoice*
 ' *evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing*
 ' *give thanks, which is the will of God concerning*
 ' *him.* As this state of perfect love must neces-
 ' sarily include the destruction of self-will, self-
 ' seeking, self righteousness, self-indulgence, self-
 ' dependence, and all self-sufficiency, all wrong
 ' tempers, unholy desires, vain and sinful thoughts;
 ' so does it consequently imply a deep sense of
 ' the infinite demerit of sin, a true knowledge
 ' of ourselves, of our weakness, ignorance, and
 ' unworthiness, whereby we are constrained to
 ' take nothing to ourselves but shame, and to
 ' give all the glory to God through Christ for our
 ' salvation; for every blessing both spiritual and
 ' temporal, and God becomes all in all. Much
 ' more may be deduced from loving God with all
 ' the heart, &c. but these few hints may suffice.

' To love our neighbour as ourselves, denotes
 ' a doing unto all men, as we would they should
 ' do unto us; and a copying after Christ in laying
 ' out ourselves for the good of others, and seek-
 ' ing occasions to benefit our neighbour to the ut-
 ' most of our power, according to the light we
 ' have in the will of God herein. This love
 ' makes us to believe the best of all, to put the
 ' most favourable construction upon their words
 ' and actions that we possibly can; and when we
 ' are obliged to condemn the conduct of any, it
 ' suffers us not to judge the person, but inclines us
 ' to hope the best, and to cover the sin, being un-
 ' willing to disclose the faults of another, unless
 ' good

' good may proceed therefrom, or evil be prevent-
 ' ed. It also suffers long, bears, forbears, forgives,
 ' behaves itself not unseemly, is not puffed up;
 ' sets us not above others, but lays us at the feet of
 ' all men, and is kind, meek, gentle, and easy
 ' to be intreated. It bears reproaches, contra-
 ' diction, oppositions, and contempt with cheer-
 ' fulness; it suffers others to dissent from us in
 ' opinion; will think, and let think, and believes
 ' that others may be right, and that we ourselves
 ' may be mistaken; though with respect to essen-
 ' tials, we are well grounded and immoveable,
 ' being assured of their certainty from experience
 ' as well as from scripture. This is what I call
 ' christian perfection, and what I think is impli-
 ' ed in loving God with all the heart, and our
 ' neighbour as ourselves, or is included in being
 ' *cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit,*
 ' and the having of a *heart of flesh, a new and clean*
 ' *heart.*'

Which I pray the Lord to create in you, Sir,
 And your affectionate brother.



To the same.

SIR,

HAVING in a former letter endeavoured
 to shew from a treatise therein referred to,
 what is to be understood by Christian Perfection,
 I shall proceed to prove from the same author,
 that that perfection may be enjoyed long before
 death; which, as he observes, appears clear both
 from reason and scripture,

' FIRST,

' FIRST from reason. 1. Every command of
 ' a superior requires immediate compliance there-
 ' to, unless some other time is fixed; but there
 ' is no time fixed when we should love God
 ' with all our heart, and our neighbour as our-
 ' selves, therefore we must conclude that *now*, the
 ' present moment is the time. But did I say,
 ' no time is fixed? Surely there is; for God has
 ' said *To-day*, and again, *now is the accepted time*,
 ' *now is the day of salvation*. 2. The very na-
 ' ture of the command itself, as well as it's be-
 ' ing much enforced and set forth in a variety
 ' of forms, as also the reasonableness of it, and
 ' the great obligation we are under thus to love
 ' God, shew that the duty is not to be deferr'd
 ' to a dying moment; especially as the word of
 ' God puts it not off 'till then, but continually
 ' upbraids us with our unbelief and littleness of
 ' faith. 3. Surely all the promises concerning
 ' holiness, which is our qualification for heaven,
 ' and those commands of *cleansing ourselves from*
 ' *all filthiness of flesh and spirit*, of *purifying our-*
 ' *selves even as he is pure*, and of *rejoicing ever-*
 ' *more*, *praying without ceasing*, and *in every thing*
 ' *giving thanks*, and *doing the will of God upon*
 ' *earth, as it is done in heaven*; and all others of
 ' the like kind must relate to this life: But if death
 ' only puts a period to sin, then those promises
 ' and commandments do not relate to this life, but
 ' to eternity; and we must die before we can love
 ' God with all our heart, &c. and our neighbour
 ' as ourselves, and rejoice evermore, and pray
 ' without ceasing. How absurd is this! We
 ' must enter upon our eternal state, in order to
 ' have the promises relating to this life fulfilled;
 ' which cannot be before, if sin is not destroyed
 Q 'till

'till the body dies! But more of this, when I
 come to prove the doctrine more fully from
 scripture. 4. As God designs we should glo-
 rify him upon earth, we should certainly do it
 better with the heart wholly cleansed from sin
 and given up to him, than we can with the
 remains of sin in it; Christ being not only a
 prophet to teach, a priest to reconcile God and
 sinners together, but a king also to reign, and
save to the uttermost all who come to God through
him. He will thrust out the enemy from before
them, and will say, destroy them. Deut. xxxiii. 27.
 Fifthly and lastly. Every believer groaning un-
 der the weight of in-dwelling sin, panting for
 full liberty to love God with all the heart, and
 longing for entire conformity to his blessed will
 in all things, must have this groaning, pant-
 ing, longing from the spirit of God which is
 in him, and shall not God hearken to his own
 blessed spirit? Shall he create a thirst which
 he will not satisfy? Shall he create a cry which
 he will not answer? Shall he give desires which
 he will not fulfil? So far from it, he says, Psal.
 lxxxi. 10. *that he will fulfil the desires of them*
that fear him. And he assures us, *that he is able*
to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or
think, according to the power that worketh in us.
 Ephes. iii. 20. Shall he give his child to see and
 feel the evil of sin, to make him groan under
 the weight of it, and will he not deliver him
 therefrom? Shall he shew him his privilege, or
 at least the beauty of such a state, and not give
 him to enjoy the same? Shew him the promises,
 and not accomplish them in him? Shall God
 so mock his child? Man may do it, but God
 cannot. *Men will not believe, therefore they are*
not established.

‘ SECONDLY,

‘SECONDLY, from scripture likewise, this
 ‘state appears to be attainable. The apostle
 ‘Paul, by the Holy Ghost, commands us to re-
 ‘joice evermore, pray without ceasing, in every
 ‘thing give thanks. Now how shall this com-
 ‘mand be comply’d with, if sin is not destroy’d
 ‘before the article of death? No man can do it
 ‘in his life time, because of the remains of sin
 ‘that is in him, and no man can do it when sin
 ‘is destroyed. To whom then is the command
 ‘given, and by whom shall it be obeyed? As I
 ‘read of no commandments given to departed
 ‘spirits, I presume all the commandments in the
 ‘bible belong to the living. To the dead they
 ‘cannot, for the above reason, and because in
 ‘eternity there will be no need of prayer. And
 ‘though there the spirits of just men made per-
 ‘fect will be always praising God, yet they will
 ‘not be thanking him for present sufferings and
 ‘temporal blessings, which seem to be imply’d
 ‘in *giving thanks to God in every thing*; for they
 ‘will then have done with them all.

‘It will make nothing against this argument,
 ‘that some believe we may be delivered from sin
 ‘a few minutes, or hours before we die, though
 ‘not weeks, nor months, nor years, and there-
 ‘fore the command may still be complied with,
 ‘and power be given to *rejoice evermore, pray*
 ‘*without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks,*
 ‘before we die. It is plain that this must be
 ‘quite foreign to the Spirit’s meaning; for these
 ‘words seem to be oppos’d to all the trials and
 ‘temptations which may come upon us from
 ‘the world, the devil, and an afflicted body.
 ‘As if the apostle had said, not only rejoice
 Q 2 ‘when

' when you meet with no opposition, but *rejoice*
 ' also in the midst of *tribulation*, and *count it all*
 ' *joy that you are tempted*, because an opportunity
 ' is now given you of bringing great glory to
 ' God, and of advancing yourselves in holiness;
 ' and this do, not only sometimes, but always,
 ' evermore. Be always in prayer, for you will
 ' be surrounded with enemies as long as you are
 ' in the world, and will be always wanting
 ' heavenly wisdom, and divine assistance. And
 ' to be always in prayer, is to be ever putting
 ' forth all kinds of desires unto God, that are
 ' suited to our condition, according to his will;
 ' to be continually looking up to Jesus, to de-
 ' pend wholly upon him, to expect constant sup-
 ' plies of grace from him sufficient for every
 ' trial, and for the performing of every duty,
 ' to do nothing without him, to leave every
 ' thing to him, and to commit ourselves wholly
 ' to him, and this not only now and then, but
 ' at all times, without ceasing. Be thankful
 ' in every thing. Give thanks for adversity,
 ' as well as for prosperity; for evil as well as
 ' for good report; for pain, as well as for ease;
 ' for sickness, as well as for health; for the
 ' loss of goods, as well as for the increase of
 ' substance; for the death, as well as for the
 ' life of friends; for enemies, and for tempta-
 ' tions from the devil, as well as for freedom
 ' therefrom. Give thanks not only for what is
 ' naturally pleasing to us, but for what is also
 ' grievous to carnal men; be thankful that the
 ' will of God is accomplished. For he that is
 ' fully conform'd thereto, will be sensible that
 ' his will is always best; if so, it is matter of
 ' thankfulness that what is, is either permitted
 ' or

' ordered by unerring wisdom, therefore in every
 ' thing give thanks, and not only do so now and
 ' then, but at all times, upon every occasion.
 ' *The pure in heart see God* in all things, there-
 ' fore in every thing they give thanks. While *Job*
 ' saw God in all his losses of goods and children,
 ' he could praise God; but afterwards losing
 ' that sight of God which he had at first, he lost
 ' patience: Now what he did at one time, we are
 ' commanded to do always. If after all it should
 ' be said, all this may be done, though sin re-
 ' mains in the heart, I deny it; as well as that
 ' any man can love God with all his heart, and
 ' his neighbour as himself, whilst there is the re-
 ' mains of sin in him. The thing is so plain,
 ' that it needs no other proof than appealing
 ' to every believer's conscience, whether sin,
 ' when stirring and rising up in the heart, tho'
 ' it should be kept under, is not an interruption
 ' to joy, prayer, and thankfulness, and whether
 ' it does not frequently put us off our guard,
 ' and in spite of all our efforts prevent our be-
 ' ing engaged in those duties agreeable to the
 ' injunction.

' ZACHARY being filled with the Holy Ghost,
 ' prophesied, *That we being delivered out of the*
 ' *hands of our enemies, should serve God without*
 ' *fear, in holiness* (implying an inward confor-
 ' mity to the divine image,) *and righteousness*
 ' (implying an outward conformity to the divine
 ' will,) *all the days of our life.* The latter
 ' clause certainly puts the question out of all
 ' dispute, *All the days of our life.* Not in the
 ' article of death, when it will be out of our
 ' power thus to serve him; but in our life, whilst

' we have health and strength. And our Saviour
 ' teaches us thus to pray, *Thy will be done on earth,*
 ' *as it is done in heaven.* And how is it done
 ' there? Why in every particular, with constan-
 ' cy and chearfulness without any mixture of im-
 ' patience, discontent, or unholy dispositions.
 ' Can it be supposed when we make this prayer
 ' agreeable to his own instruction, that our Lord
 ' would not have us to expect the power to do his
 ' will, 'till our breath leaves us, when we cannot
 ' possibly do his will upon earth as it is done in
 ' heaven; can we imagine that he commands us
 ' to pray for what he designs we should never
 ' perform?

' WE read also, that he gave himself for us,
 ' that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and pu-
 ' rify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good
 ' works. And St. John tells us, that God is faith-
 ' ful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us
 ' from all unrighteousness. Faithful and just to
 ' forgive us our sins! Why? What obligation is
 ' he under to forgive us, who are by nature chil-
 ' dren of wrath, and more so by wicked works?
 ' All that he has to bind or oblige him thereto, is
 ' his own promises; and now the word is gone out
 ' of his mouth, he cannot reject any that come
 ' to him through his son, whom he has given for
 ' the sins of the whole world, because he is a
 ' promise-keeping God. But is this forgiveness
 ' to be experienced in life? Or a few moments,
 ' or hours before death, or longer? The apostle
 ' mentions nothing at all of the precise time, but the
 ' general tenor of scripture is this, *he that believ-*
 ' *eth shall be saved,* and many who have simply
 ' relied upon the merits of Christ, have proved
 ' him

' him faithful in forgiving them instantly, and
 ' have lived twenty, thirty or forty years after.
 ' Will not the same argument then hold good in
 ' the other case? Certainly it will. Let us try.
 ' Is he faithful and just, to cleanse us from all un-
 ' righteousness? Why? What obligation is he
 ' under? Or what has he to bind him? Our me-
 ' rits, or our faithfulness? No, nothing of all
 ' this, but his own promises, which he has again
 ' and again made, that he will do it, if we will
 ' but seek the blessing, according to his will.
 ' For what he has promised, his faithfulness binds
 ' him to fulfil. But when will he do it? In the
 ' article of death, or a little before, or some time
 ' before we die? The scriptures herein are silent,
 ' and leave us to the use of our reason, which
 ' ought to dictate to us, that as God has com-
 ' manded us to love him with all our heart, and
 ' has promised to circumcise it that we may, and
 ' being under the greatest obligations so to do,
 ' we ought not to defer it, but to seek and expect
 ' the power, 'till we receive it. God being wil-
 ' ling to justify a sinner long before death, by pa-
 ' rity of reason, he is willing *to cleanse* the be-
 ' liever *from all filthiness of flesh and spirit* long
 ' before death; for the promises relating to both,
 ' are of the same tenor. We find no distinction in
 ' the bible, that God has made between justifica-
 ' tion and sanctification, in respect of time. He
 ' does not say, that the one may be at any time,
 ' but the other not 'till a little before death. Do
 ' we not then dishonour God, to imagine that he
 ' will be faithful long before death, to justify a
 ' sinner who diligently seeks him; whilst we make
 ' him to mock his children, by enabling them to
 ' abhor even a sinful thought, by creating within
 ' them

' them unutterable groans, and strong cries day
 ' and night, for deliverance from inbred sin, and
 ' giving them great and precious promises, where-
 ' by they might be encouraged to seek and ex-
 ' pect a release every moment, when, after all,
 ' he will not free them 'till death. The apostle
 ' therefore to vindicate God, tells us, that *he is*
 ' *faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighte-*
 ' *ousness, as well as to forgive us our sins.* Sure-
 ' ly if he had prov'd himself faithful in doing the
 ' one, he will be faithful to do the other also, if
 ' we seek the one as diligently as we sought the
 ' other. If any should say, to cleanse from all
 ' unrighteousness, does not mean the extirpation
 ' of all sin, I would ask, what does it mean?
 ' The word unrighteousness here in the text, if
 ' it has any meaning at all, must imply inward as
 ' well as outward sin, whatever it may do else-
 ' where. Therefore to be cleans'd from all un-
 ' righteousness is to be delivered from all unholy
 ' tempers, desires, thoughts; to have them ut-
 ' terly destroy'd, to have their memory perish, so
 ' as to feel them no more.

' BUT some may say, we see no witnesses of
 ' this, none who are thus cleans'd, therefore we
 ' cannot believe the doctrine of entire sanctifica-
 ' tion; but we see witnesses of justification, peo-
 ' ple who know their sins forgiven, therefore
 ' we can believe the doctrine of present pardon,
 ' or justification. This is nothing to the purpose.
 ' For in fact, the truth is, they believe the doc-
 ' trine of the one, therefore they believe there are
 ' witnesses of it; they deny the doctrine of the
 ' other, therefore they believe there are no wit-
 ' nesses thereof. Some again credit nothing of
 ' justification,

' justification, and therefore deny there are any
 ' who know their sins forgiven; but is this any
 ' proof against the doctrine? Yes, if the former
 ' proves any thing against the doctrine of entire
 ' sanctification; for the one proves just as much
 ' as the other, and no more. Therefore, if this
 ' manner of proving the truth is to be allowed in
 ' the one case, it should be allowed in the other
 ' also, and then we must come to this unhappy
 ' conclusion, that neither the one nor the other,
 ' is to be experienced in this life. But to the
 ' law and the testimony: For the most prudent
 ' way is to be determined by them, and not by
 ' men's experience, nor by what they believe.
 ' St. Paul, in praying for the *Thessalonians*, says,
 ' *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly: And*
 ' *I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body,*
 ' *be preserved blameless, to the coming of our Lord*
 ' *Jesus Christ. Faithful is he, that calleth you,*
 ' *who also will do it.* Can any scripture or words
 ' express a liberty from sin, in a stronger man-
 ' ner? And can any thing be plainer than the pro-
 ' mise annexed? *He will do it.* But when? In
 ' the article of death? Or just a few minutes, or
 ' hours before we depart? There is not the least
 ' intimation of death in the whole sentence. Is
 ' it possible that these words should be intended
 ' for the dying? Surely reason dictates they are
 ' not to be so understood. Who does not believe,
 ' if he dies with his spirit, soul and body wholly
 ' sanctified, that he shall be preserved blameless,
 ' to the day of judgment? As death puts an end
 ' to every thing relating to time, every promise
 ' concerning holiness, which is our qualification
 ' for glory, is no more to be deferr'd 'till death;
 ' than our justification should be put off 'till then;
 ' and

' and there is just the same grounds in scripture;
 ' to defer the one as the other, to that period.
 ' All God's commandments relate to our state of
 ' probation, and afterwards we shall be condemn-
 ' ed or acquitted, as we have conformed or
 ' lived agreeable thereto; therefore, no com-
 ' mandment in the bible can concern us in the
 ' article of death; for in that instant our proba-
 ' tion ends, and we are no longer in a capacity
 ' of obeying or disobeying those commands which
 ' relate to this life. To postpone all the com-
 ' mandments, referring to the *purifying ourselves*
 ' *even as God is pure*; and all the sanctifying pro-
 ' mises 'till death, is to make God give very
 ' strange commands, and odd kind of promises.
 ' It is to make him say something, and to mean
 ' nothing. And though God may not deliver
 ' all his children from sin, 'till the last moment;
 ' yet it is plain, none of the commandments can
 ' refer to that period, any more than the com-
 ' mand of believing, and the promises of justi-
 ' fication refer to the last moment, because some
 ' are not justified 'till then. *Ask, saith Christ,*
 ' *that your joy may be full.* What, that our joy
 ' may be full, when we come to die? No surely.
 ' But ask that it may be full now, for certainly it
 ' will be full after death, if we go to glory. And
 ' surely the words must imply the destruction of
 ' sin, for joy cannot be said to be full, whilst sin
 ' is mix'd with it, or sin remains in the heart.

' If the above scriptures will not prove a free-
 ' dom from sin before death, I think, none will,
 ' therefore I shall produce no more; but conclude
 ' by shewing, that some the apostles wrote to,
 ' must have attained, unless we make those scrip-
 ' tures,

' tures, which shall be now consider'd, to have
 ' no meaning, or the different states of christians
 ' which the apostles make, to be one and the same.
 ' St. *John* wrote to little children, young men
 ' and fathers. Unless fathers were such as had
 ' attain'd, what distinction shall be made between
 ' children and young men, and between these and
 ' fathers? True St. *Paul* says, *I count not myself*
 ' *to have apprehended*, (surely not meaning that he
 ' had not received the perfect love of God, which
 ' casts out all fear, but that he had not received
 ' all that measure of grace he saw was for him
 ' before his departure; or having an eye to his
 ' martyrdom, and the day of the resurrection, he
 ' could not count himself to have attain'd 'till
 ' then, being a thirst to die for his Lord, and to
 ' rise bodily as well as spiritually, after his like-
 ' nefs. Therefore these words may be very con-
 ' sistent with the following, and in no wise prove,
 ' that neither he, nor any of those to whom he
 ' wrote, were not delivered from sin.) *Therefore*
 ' *let us, as many as be perfect, be thus minded,*
 ' *still to press forward after farther degrees of*
 ' *holiness, for there is much more for us than*
 ' *we have yet received:* And we may suppose
 ' that St. *John* and many more were partakers
 ' of this holiness which we have been describ-
 ' ing, when he wrote his first epistle, chapter
 ' iv. 17. *Herein is our love made perfect, that we*
 ' *may have boldness in the day of judgment; because*
 ' *as he is, so are we in this world.*

' What Christ tells us concerning the corn,
 ' that when it is ripe, the sickle is thrust in, and
 ' it is cut down, does not at all prove any thing
 ' against our being delivered from sin long before
 ' death,

death, unless we maintain'd, there was no
 growth afterwards, which we do not. So far
 from proving any thing against the doctrine
 which hath been advanced, I think it will suffi-
 ciently evince the truth of the same. Our
 Lord speaks thus concerning it. *The earth
 bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade,
 then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.
 But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he putteth
 in the sickle, because the harvest is come.* Observe
 these words, *But when the fruit is ripe.* It is
 plain the fruit is not ripe so soon as the field
 is weeded, and the corn is full in the ear, and
 it is not cut down when it is full, but when it
 is ripe. So a believer may be deliver'd from all
 sin, be full of love, of God and of Christ, and
 yet not ripe for glory; for the Lord might
 have much for him to do and to suffer, after his
 being delivered from in-bred sin, being now in
 a capacity of suffering with chearfulness, and
 of doing his will with diligence, and both with
 steadiness, and hereby bringing great glory to
 God. A soul then is ripe for glory, when the
 whole will of God is accomplished in him, by
 him, and upon him. Some indeed whom the
 Lord might deliver from all sin may not be call-
 ed to do nor to suffer afterwards, therefore hav-
 ing nothing more to do or to suffer, are ripe as
 soon as sin is destroyed, and their souls filled
 with love. And perhaps when God frees his
 children from sin long before their dissolution,
 he gives them not so large a measure of his
 spirit, nor such a degree of grace, as he bestows
 instantly upon those whom he takes immediate-
 ly to himself, after delivering them from all in-
 bred sin, leaving the other to grow 'till they receive
 such

such a measure of his spirit and degree of holiness, as shall be their fitness for glory. That measure of his spirit and degree of holiness which may be the fitness of one, may not be the fitness of another; for as one star differeth from another star in glory, so also will saints differ at the resurrection.

As I see in the bible, the commandments simply laid down with the promises annexed, and I read nothing about the article of death, I will, by the grace of God, regard not the words of man, but simply adhere to the word of God. And should I be mistaken, I shall act more consistently in believing that I shall receive that which I pray for, than those do who pray for what they believe they never shall enjoy 'till after their translation. And the more I press after the perfect love of God, though I should miss of it, yet it seems to me I shall grow more holy, and be more happy in believing my desires shall be fulfilled, and my labour shall not be in vain, than those will be who, though they may pray for it, do not press after it, nor believe their desires shall be accomplished. And I imagine it can be nothing less than sin to pray that God would do that for me (as perhaps there is not a believer but prays that God would cleanse him from all sin, and give him to love him with all his heart, that he might serve him more perfectly the residue of his life,) which I suppose he never will, as not believing it agreeable to his will thus to cleanse me, and circumscribe my heart, that I might serve him in holiness and righteousness all the rest of my days. Surely this is not praying with the

R

understanding,

‘understanding, any more than it is praying in
‘faith.’

To conclude, not to love God with all the heart, &c. and our neighbour as ourselves, is a breach of the two greatest commandments which every believer ought to be humbled for, and acknowledge with shame to God, though he need not distress himself upon account thereof, if he really desires to fulfil them; as none but God can circumcise the heart, and cleanse it from all impurity: But then he should seek the blessing as the one thing needful for him; relying upon God’s faithfulness, and expecting it every moment till he receives it. As this is the liberty designed by God for his children, and what he is striving to bring them to, by all his threatnings and promises, all his cautions and warnings, his judgments and tender mercies, various operations of his spirit, and permission of innumerable temptations to assault; let us beware how we “break them and teach men so,” for such (saith Christ), “shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Among which latter and happy number, I pray you may be found,

SIR,

and your sincere friend,



To the same.

SIR,

WHEN I first had a thought of extracting
the first part of the treatise on *Christian
Perfection*,

Perfection, I had no intention of proceeding farther; but upon a more mature reflection, it appear'd that if the second and third parts had a place in your book, the first would be more beneficial and better approv'd of; by this means also the substance of that useful treatise would be read by many, who now will not look into it, because of the title, against which they have imbibed an inveterate prejudice; though it were to be wished that every religious person had that treatise, whether they believe the doctrine of perfection or no, upon account of that union between Christ and a believer; which it treats of in the second part, as it is there called,

The division of 1st, 2d, and 3d, I myself have made for distinction sake, though all these in that tract are included in the first. My first division unfolds the doctrine, the second proves such a state to be attainable long before death, and this points out the manner whereby we might be happy partakers of it.

The believer (continues my author) that would arrive at it must be thoroughly awaken'd to a deep feeling sense of the want of it, in order to go on steadily in the way of obedience, and to rejoice always. He must also see the danger he is expos'd to of making shipwreck of faith, whilst there is in him *an evil heart of unbelief*, which would continually make him to depart from the living God. He must take care that he lays no other foundation than that which is already laid, the Lord Jesus Christ; through whom, and by faith in whose blood, he continues in the favour of God, and *not by works of righteousness*

' *righteousness that he hath done.* As at first, by
 ' faith, and not by the deeds of the law, he was
 ' justified; so by faith, and not by the deeds of
 ' the law, he continues in a justified state. And
 ' as pardon is God's free gift, he must see that
 ' holiness is also; that God sanctifies as freely
 ' as he justifies; and that therefore by the deeds
 ' of the law, he can no more merit the perfect
 ' love of God, than he could before justification
 ' by his good works, merit that degree of love
 ' which he received when he was first justified.
 ' He must be sensible of the purity of God's na-
 ' ture, of his law, as also of his own depravity;
 ' and believe, that if he perseveres in seeking,
 ' and will not rest without that perfect love which
 ' casteth out all fear, he shall surely obtain it.
 ' But then he must seek it by denying himself,
 ' taking up his cross, watching, praying, fight-
 ' ing, endeavouring to be found in every duty,
 ' and feeling that after all he is but an *unprofita-*
 ' *ble servant.* His dependence must be upon the
 ' faithfulness of him, who has promised to *cleanse*
 ' *us from all unrighteousness,* and not upon the
 ' means he uses, or any thing he does or has
 ' done. Sin being his burden, which he truly
 ' hates, and a full conformity to God in all
 ' things his desire, his unfaithfulness and un-
 ' worthiness should not discourage him; for he
 ' ought to be sensible that he will never be wor-
 ' thy, and that he is never likely to be faithful,
 ' whilst his heart remains deceitful, which it will
 ' be, whilst sin or unbelief is in it. Therefore
 ' he should eye the *promises* whereby he might
 ' *partake of the divine nature,* and look upon him-
 ' self as the object to whom they belong, as not
 ' being made to the pure in heart, but to those
 ' who

' who desire to be so. A belief hereof will make
 ' him to seek, and expect the renewal of his soul in
 ' righteousness, in spite of all oppositions. Yea,
 ' though the Lord proves him for a while by dry-
 ' ness in prayer, deadness in every ordinance;
 ' lays open to his view all the evil of his heart,
 ' and permits the enemy to come in as a flood,
 ' yet will he say, *He that shall come, will come,*
 ' *and will not tarry.* These temptations being in-
 ' tended for his good, if he will exercise faith,
 ' instead of giving place to evil-reasoning, mur-
 ' muring, and impatience, his soul shall be brought
 ' nearer to God thereby. The Lord first proves
 ' us various ways, before he gives us the blessing.
 ' He will delay the fulfilment of his promises for
 ' a season to try our faith, to prove whether we
 ' will continue to seek 'till we find, and patiently
 ' wait his time, and simply rely upon his faith-
 ' fulness to do as he has promised, in spite of
 ' our unworthiness and corruption, his delays,
 ' and all oppositions whatever. So he tried the
 ' children of Israel whom he intended to bring
 ' into the good land, but because they grew im-
 ' patient, and gave way to unbelief and murmur-
 ' ing, *He swore in his wrath, that they should not*
 ' *enter into his rest.* Let him therefore that would
 ' enter into that rest, where God is lov'd alone,
 ' and all is joy and peace, take heed he does not
 ' fall short of it after their example, and charge God
 ' foolishly; but rather let him be discouraged by
 ' nothing, not even by his falls, knowing that a
 ' full conformity to God in all things is the very
 ' desire of his soul, and to please him the only
 ' thing he would aim at. But let him act faith
 ' upon Jesus Christ, the goodness of God, and
 ' his promises, by means of which his faith shall

' be increased, and he shall receive more strength,
 ' and light, and the promises shall be surely ac-
 ' complished in due season. No child of God
 ' that desires to be delivered from inbred sin, should
 ' look to his unworthiness, to the length of time
 ' he has been justified, to his faithfulness and
 ' steadiness since he has been pardoned, to his
 ' sufferings; neither to this nor to the other be-
 ' liever who is not yet delivered from his evil
 ' heart; but to Christ *sitting upon his throne, and*
 ' *creating all things new*, considering whether he
 ' now thirsts, uses the means, and pleads the pro-
 ' mises relating to such an one, and to such a
 ' condition; one of which promises is this, *Let*
 ' *him that is athirst come*, in the present tense.
 ' Come now, come whilst he is athirst, come as
 ' soon as he is athirst, not when his thirst is gone,
 ' for then he will not come; besides, there is no
 ' promise for any who is not athirst.

' AGREEABLE to this is that other text, *Bless-*
 ' *ed are they who hunger and thirst after righteous-*
 ' *ness, for they shall be filled.* And though the
 ' Lord should withhold the blessing for a season
 ' to try his faith and patience, let him continue
 ' seeking and trusting in the Lord, and expect-
 ' ing it every moment. He should be entirely
 ' resigned to the will of God, leaving the time
 ' and manner to him when and how to bestow it,
 ' only he must obstinately persist in seeking and
 ' expecting, because he who has promised cannot
 ' lie; and nothing pleases God more than such
 ' a well-grounded confidence in him as is not to
 ' be shaken upon any account. No; though he
 ' should seemingly deny to satisfy his desires, and
 ' should deal with him as with the Syro-Phoeni-
 ' cian

' cian woman, whose faith he so much applaud-
 ' ed; and as God is true, he will meet with her
 ' success, for he shall be delivered, and that ere
 ' long. For his encouragement he has these
 ' scriptures. *O that my people had hearkened to me,*
 ' (that is believed me) *and Israel had walked in*
 ' *my ways, I should soon have subdued their ene-*
 ' *mis.* Mark that word, SOON. *And shall not*
 ' *God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night*
 ' *to him? I tell you that he will avenge them spee-*
 ' *dily.* Observe that word also, SPEEDILY.
 ' Reader, may the Lord impress it upon thy heart;
 ' that if thou art sincerely seeking the blessing
 ' he may *speedily avenge thee.*—

' If any man should ask whether the destru-
 ' cion of sin is gradual or instantaneous, I answer
 ' it is both. And so is justification. The one
 ' is as the other. A sinner is first convinced of
 ' sin, then of unbelief, afterwards of his own
 ' righteousness being but as filthy rags, and by
 ' continuing in the means of grace, grows in
 ' the knowledge of himself, sin, and the nature
 ' of faith; and some weeks, months, or years
 ' after, is justified. And though this may not
 ' be the experience of all, yet it is of many.
 ' Some perhaps may be convinced at one and the
 ' same time of sin, unbelief, and the insuffi-
 ' ciency of their own righteousness to merit God's
 ' favour; yet they grow in this knowledge, and
 ' receive more and more power accordingly to
 ' forsake sin, renounce themselves, and see the
 ' great need they have of Christ; and after a
 ' while they are set at liberty. In both cases,
 ' though in the above instances the work is gra-
 ' dual, yet the removal of guilt, or the act of
 ' justifying;

justifying, is instantaneous. In like manner,
 a believer denies himself, mortifies the deeds of
 the body, strives to suffer, and to do all the
 will of God, endeavours to have a watchful
 spirit, and to keep under all his corruptions,
 that they might in no wise have power over
 him; but, after all, finding he is often taken
 off his guard, by means of which he is fre-
 quently overcome by impatience, pride, foolish
 desires, vain thoughts; and sometimes led to
 murmur at Providence; yea, to neglect duties,
 to grow weary of ordinances, to be cold, dead,
 and wandering in the use of them; and to give
 place to lightness, unprofitable talk, and unne-
 cessarily speaking of the faults of others, he is
 more convinced of the sinfulness of sin, the de-
 ceitfulness of his own heart, and the precious-
 ness of Christ; whereby he sees that every mo-
 ment he needs the merits of his death, and
 his constant teaching; but more especially that
 he wants him as a king, to destroy all his ene-
 mies. By means of this great opposition which
 sin makes, he is made very sensible of the ab-
 solute necessity there is of having it totally tak-
 en away, root and branch, and therefore strives
 against it with all his might; though the more
 he is determined to have it destroyed, the more
 it opposes; and the believer that is thus strug-
 gling for mastery, feels the power and strength
 of it perhaps in a greater degree than another,
 who is not like-minded. It is probable when
 the struggle is at the height, the believer fight-
 ing against it, as it were foot to foot, never
 felt sin so strong and powerful as now; and he
 may be so put to it, as to think he must yield;
 and can hold out no more. Then it is that
 Christ

' Christ, the captain of his salvation, steps forth,
 ' and slays it with the brightness of his coming;
 ' then in an instant the opposition ends, the car-
 ' nal mind vanishes away, and the soul is set at
 ' full liberty. Nevertheless after this, there is a
 ' constant growing, and receiving more and more
 ' of the image of God, 'till we are ripe for glory,
 ' the corn being now but just full in the ear.
 ' And this release from sin, as well as the deli-
 ' verance from guilt, may be within a few weeks,
 ' or months, after we begin to seek it as we
 ' ought. For we do not read in the bible that
 ' we must seek it, so long a time at least, before
 ' we should expect to receive it; or that a sinner
 ' has greater encouragement to expect pardon
 ' much sooner after he begins to seek it in good
 ' earnest, than a believer to expect freedom from
 ' inbred sin, when he seeks it with his whole
 ' heart. To me it appears, that the scriptures
 ' give the same encouragement to the one as to
 ' the other. Why so few attain to a liberty from
 ' sin, and so many experience the forgiveness of
 ' their sins, a good reason may be assign'd. Ma-
 ' ny believe and seek the one, but few believe
 ' and seek the other.

' THAT the destruction of sin is instantane-
 ' ous, is evident, because the rooting of it out, or
 ' making a full end of it, depends not at all up-
 ' on works, nor upon our faithfulness, any more
 ' than justification depends thereon; but entirely
 ' upon our believing God, that he will do as he
 ' has promised, and upon his faithfulness to ac-
 ' complish what he has engaged to do, upon con-
 ' dition of our believing. If it should be said,
 ' There is a difference between a seeker and a be-
 ' liever,

' liever, and that more is required of the one
 ' than of the other; I deny it absolutely with re-
 ' spect to meriting any thing. If means are to
 ' be used by the one, so are they to be used by
 ' the other; and as the one should, so ought the
 ' other to look through them to Christ. What
 ' the one should expect from them, the other
 ' ought, and no more. The believer has no more
 ' to bring, than the sinner, and can receive no-
 ' thing from God but by faith; being sanctified
 ' as well as justified thereby. *Acts xxvi. 18.* By
 ' faith we obtain promises. *Heb. xi. 33.*

' It is with sin, as it is with a tree. You may
 ' lop it, but the branches will grow again; take
 ' it up by the roots, and the memory of it shall
 ' perish. You may imagine a particular sin is de-
 ' stroyed, and aim at the extirpation of another;
 ' but because the root remains, you shall find,
 ' when a proper occasion offers, that *that* sin,
 ' though apparently dead, shall rise again, and
 ' attack you with more violence than ever. And
 ' because you thought it dead, you will be in
 ' greater danger of being overcome by it; and
 ' this may be the case, after it has been asleep
 ' for years. To aim at the destruction of any
 ' one sin, without laying the axe to the root, is
 ' like rocking a child to sleep, whom you may
 ' quiet for the present, but he will awake by and
 ' by, and give you as much if not more trouble
 ' than ever. To strive to have the heart cleans-
 ' ed from all corruption, by destroying one sin
 ' after another, is never the way to cleanse it;
 ' for who knows the thousandth part of his sins?
 ' And if any one had a thorough knowledge of all
 ' the branches springing from that evil root, he
 ' would

' would require an eternity to purify his heart in,
 ' seeing he is so long before he can apparently
 ' accomplish the ruin of one; and after flatter-
 ' ing himself for a season, that he has entirely
 ' conquered it, he is again as violently assaulted
 ' by the same, as if it was the only sin now re-
 ' maining, and all the rest were totally destroyed;
 ' though perhaps an host of them, after a while,
 ' shall attack him all together, and drive him to
 ' his wit's end. The overthrow of sin being an
 ' act of omnipotency, is *not* effected by *might*, nor
 ' by *power*, but by *my spirit*, saith the Lord. It is
 ' slain at a stroke, when the Lord lays to his hand;
 ' dries up the fountain, and unites us wholly
 ' to himself. However, if we desire deliverance,
 ' we must use the means; but we must look for no
 ' more from them, than the Israelites did from
 ' the blowing of ram's horns; yet, had they not
 ' performed that command, God would not have
 ' thrown down the walls of Jericho, being not
 ' bound by his promise to do it, but upon their
 ' following his directions. So only the mighty
 ' power of God can throw down the walls of
 ' in-dwelling sin in our hearts; and he will not do
 ' it, but in the use of the means he has ordained.

' FROM what has been said it appears, that I
 ' have advanced nothing but what is altogether
 ' scriptural, and agreeable to sound experience;
 ' sanctification must be acknowledged to be a
 ' progressive work, and the destruction of sin an
 ' instantaneous act."

I heartily pray that all true believers may be
 convinced of their unspeakable privilege, and en-
 couraged to press after the enjoyment of it; and
 that

that you and they may enter into this glorious
rest, where God is lov'd alone, as also,

SIR,

Your sincere friend and servant,



April, 1768.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been often grieved to hear preachers
tell their congregation, when they have been
shewing who the people of God are, that they
are only those who know their sins forgiven, and
have received the spirit of adoption. But I can't
conceive that they have any authority from scrip-
ture for speaking thus. Those sacred pages ra-
ther teach us, that the people of God are all
those who fear him; and this certainly implies
seekers as well as believers. That men who have
the fear of God are his people, I think, is plain
in holy writ; for, "On these who fear his
name shall the Son of Righteousness arise with
healing in his wings." On believers he hath
already risen, therefore the text cannot mean
them, but those who are seeking God with all
their heart, and have not yet tasted of his par-
doning love. Who will then be so bold as to
affirm, that those who fear God, have deliberate-
ly chosen him, renounced the devil with the
world and all in it, approve of his laws, and
plan of salvation, are not to be reckoned among
his people?

A sinner turning to God, truly repenting of all his former sins, relying only on the merits of Christ for pardon, holiness, and heaven, has as good a right to claim all the promises as the children of God have, and to expect every spiritual blessing, and temporal too, so far as they may conduce to his happiness, as the others. And they may, and ought, as well as those, to rest upon the faithfulness of Almighty God, to conduct them safe through the valley of the shadow of death, by making them meet for glory, before they pass through it. As seekers dying unpardoned, cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven; so neither can believers dying with the remains of sin in them; but God will cut his work short in righteousness, both in the one and the other, before he calls them hence, if they endure to the end. Wherefore, we may affirm from God's infallible word, that a sincere seeker can no more perish than a true believer; for God is bound by his promises to protect, bless, and save the one as the other, then consequently both are his people, the broken hearted sinner as much as the believer. *I said not, (saith God) to the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain. Isa. 45. 19. A broken and a contrite heart, O God! thou wilt not despise. Psa. 51, 7.*

NEVERTHELESS I acknowledge there is a wide difference between them. The children of God enjoy unspeakable blessings, which the others do not. It is in the church in this respect, as in a family. The master is bound to feed, support, protect, and take care of his servants, as well as children; and tho' he keeps the former at a greater distance than the latter, and there is not that fa-
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miliarity

miliarity between the master and the servant, as between the parent and child, nor have such favours conferred upon them, nor enjoy the same liberty, yet he is kind, tender, doing good to all, inasmuch as they are all under his government, and of his household. In this view I see true penitents, and therefore rank them, as I think the bible does, among the people of God.

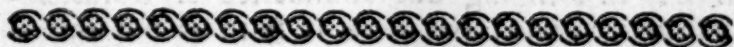
If God called backsliding *Israel* his people, saying, "My people perish for lack of knowledge," how much more are they his people, who truly fear him! Surely these are emphatically so, and with great propriety; therefore their repentance, and whatsoever they do with a single eye to God, is well-pleasing to him. It must be, I conceive, very discouraging to sinners, weeping on account of their distance from God, groaning under a guilty conscience, striving to serve him according to their power, longing to love him, and to believe in Jesus Christ, to be called children of the devil; and to be told, notwithstanding they have renounced him and all his works, that nothing they can do will please God: Beside, it is indeed no better than making God a tyrant, who is not to be pleased, though his commands are complied with. If God requires no more of a sinner than to repent, and continue in all the means 'till he gives him faith, and reveals himself to him, he, if not put in the room of Christ, or laid for a foundation, surely accepts of the same. God only expects *that* from his creatures which they *have*, and not *that* which they *have not*. He is not as man, who reaps where he has not sow'd.

If

It would be well for those who abhor Antinomianism and Moravianism to consider upon this, for it leads directly to both, and nothing more so. If my repentance and attending the ordinances are not agreeable to God, then my repentance and using the means of grace is sin; and it must be so, otherwise God would be pleased therewith. The consequence of which then is, we must do nothing, not even lift our hearts up to heaven, as this will not be pleasing to God; and so, without seeking or desiring the kingdom of God, imagine, that it will drop down into our souls as rain upon the earth: That our prayers and alms deeds are agreeable to God and accepted, if the heart is sincere, we have an instance of in *Cornelius*; yet not that he was, or we can be justified, or our persons accepted for the sake of them, but because God requires that we should cease from evil, and learn to do well, if we would be saved through the merits of his beloved son; as rebels, who have no reason to expect clemency from their prince till they throw down their arms, and acknowledge that they deserve not the mercy they sue for, and if pardoned, will own his unmerited goodness and his free grace.—Wishing that these things were more consider'd, I remain,

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

F.— G—.



CHESTER, *June*, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

I Have desired Mr. W—— to procure those books for you, and to send them by the first
S 2 good

good opportunity: But I would hope that your desiring to read them, does not proceed from your wavering. I pray God, they may not cause you to stagger, and that he would make them a means of rooting you more in your present principles! It is so hard a thing to lay fast hold on the truth, and so easy to let it go, especially when we are grievously tempted, and have been so for a long season, that I hope my dear brother will not be offended, if I put him in mind of our Lord's exhortation, WATCH; and if I advise him to read those books sparingly, and not to enter too deep into them; and it would be well to read them with much prayer and trembling. I think I have as much liberty in prayer for you, as I have for myself, and that in fact is very little, if any: However, this does not discourage me, as it is not so much liberty in the ordinances, as a will resign'd to God, that I seek after. I look upon the ordinances as instruments, or tools, to build the spiritual house with, which I shall have no farther occasion for, when the house is finished: Wherefore, whilst I know the building is going on, I care not by what means. Nevertheless, I acknowledge it is right that we should strive to wait upon God in the most agreeable manner that we can; but then after we have done our best, we should not distress ourselves because we could do no better. We may find great liberty in bringing out abundance of words before the throne; but then if faith is not mixed therewith, they are but empty sounds, and have not strength enough to reach heaven, though we ourselves should be pleas'd with them. A sigh or groan is equal to a thousand words, and a single act of faith, when a soul can neither groan
nor

nor make use of words, is to be preferred before a thousand groans or ten thousand words. But observe that this exercise of faith is actually prayer, though the soul should be ever so much shut up, and that nothing else is. A single act of faith therefore is more prevalent with God, than a multitude of groans or words, utter'd with the greatest liberty and sweetness, if faith is wanting. It may then be said with great propriety, when we live in the continual exercise of faith, that we pray without ceasing, though we may seldom find liberty in the manner we generally desire.

By a long course of dryness in duties, I think the Lord has at last brought me in a great measure to live by faith: Not but that I am ashamed I do not wait upon God in his ordinances better than I do, and count it a sin that I do not. But knowing that I cannot help myself, (without distressing myself upon account of it, which would make bad worse,) I patiently wait for the end of my trial to be answered; which is, to be brought simply to depend upon Christ alone; and not on the means, or comfort, or liberty I might be bless'd with; nor to be discouraged when I am deprived of them, whilst my conscience bears me witness that I do desire to be devoted to God, heartily abhor sin, and am willing to part with every thing that keeps me at a distance from him: And believing that when I am brought to live simply by faith, and all false props. are taken away, and Christ is all in all to me, so that I am disengaged from self, and all things here below, I shall find more freedom in every duty; wherefore, 'till then I endeavour, what I cannot help, to bear as my cross. I would rather believe for

you and myself, than find liberty in prayer for a whole hour, though I would certainly be thankful for the one as well as for the other, for both are desirable; yet if we can but believe, we should not afflict ourselves because we cannot pray as we would.

O! my dear brother! pray for faith; and if you can pray for nothing else, be heartily thankful for that, it being the only thing you want. Though I write thus to you, I would not write so to every one; for some would make a bad use thereof, and give way to carelessness and indifference in duties, which I would by no means encourage, and I trust will never be yielded to by you, nor,

DEAR SIR,

Your affectionate brother,

F—. G—.



June, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

PRAY, how do you understand these words? "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." *Psalms xxxii. 1, 2.* To me they appear to be full of matter, and to contain the whole system of the christian religion. If such an one is blessed or happy, because his transgression is forgiven; it denotes that he must be certainly assured

ed of it ; otherwise he could not be happy on that account. That such an one must unavoidably know it, will be plain, when we consider the privileges and blessedness of him whose sins are forgiven. On him the sun of righteousness is risen with healing in his wings, the light of God's reconciled countenance shineth. He has the witness of his adoption in his heart, the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, and joy in the Holy Ghost. He has God for his father, Jesus Christ for his advocate, the Blessed Spirit to teach him all things, to purify his heart, to support and comfort him under all afflictions. " We have received the spirit (saith the apostle) " which is of God ; that we might know the " things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. ii. 12. And our Lord tells us, "*Mary* " loved much, because much was forgiven her ;" which implies that she knew it, as being the cause of her love.

If any thing more is meant by sin being covered, than the guilt of it removed, it must be the power of it taken away, for such an one is not under the law ; that is, the condemning power of it, whereby he is not able to keep it, but under grace, by which he not only loves it, but is qualified to fulfil it ; and therefore sin need not have dominion over him. In those whose sin is covered, old things are done away, and all things are become new. They are new creatures, and joined to the Lord in one spirit. To have sin covered is the immediate consequence of having transgression forgiven, when the kingdom of heaven, consisting of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, is instantly brought in.

" Blessed

“BLESSED is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.” St. *Paul* has it, “Will not impute sin.” At the first view these expressions might seem to mean the same thing, but they are widely different, the one speaking of a present justification, the other of a future. And to whom will the Lord not impute sin? One in whose spirit there is no guile. But what may we understand by this? The heart being upright before God, having a deep sense of our corrupt nature, and laying it before the Lord with all the evil tempers, words, and works proceeding therefrom, without a covering; and not endeavouring to appear better before men, than what we really are; to be very sensible of the heinousness of unbelief, that it is the most crying sin, and provoking to God, therefore is more humbled upon account of it, than any other sin. He knows well that nothing is so much enforced upon us in the book of God as faith, it being of a saving nature; that salvation is begun, carried on, and completed by believing; that as we are justified by faith without the work of the law, so do we remain in the favour of God by that alone, without the deeds of the law: Wherefore, notwithstanding he loves holiness, yet he has no eye to that for his acceptance, but to Christ’s atonement; and as he puts not his obedience in the room of faith or Christ, he is not discouraged when he falls into sin; but instantly believing that satisfaction was made for that sin, and relying upon the all-sufficient merits of Christ alone, sin is not imputed to him, having been imputed to Christ when he died on the cross, tho’ without firmly believing it, he would not receive the benefit of it, and it would be imputed to him; it
being

being only by faith, Christ's merits are made over to us. So he has not the presumption to imagine, there is that virtue in his obedience for to keep him in God's favour, or to satisfy for his manifold infirmities; and that his obedience, instead of atoning for his imperfections, and being approved of by God, can in any wise be agreeable to him, but as offer'd to him thro' Christ for acceptance. Such an one who is without guile, obeys because he loves God, his commandments, the cross of Christ and self-denial, and therefore purifies himself even as God is pure, from the same principle. He obeys because he loves, but believes for acceptance, whether he has been faithful or unfaithful; wherefore always thus exercising faith, and by it standing fast in that liberty wherein Christ has made him free, when the law arrests him for his short-comings, sins of commission and omission, he beholds the lamb of God who was sacrificed for them, as well as for those committed before his justification; and by believing, and thereby continuing in the city of refuge, and not flying out of it on the wings of unbelief and evil-reasonings, the law cannot condemn him; and the Lord will not impute sin to him, and cannot, whilst he has by faith fast hold of Christ and his promises. He is not ignorant of his excessive weakness, folly, unworthiness, and manifold infirmities, but delights in the ways of God, whose service he finds perfect freedom, and the commandments of the Lord are sweeter to him than the honey comb, and the desire of his soul is to be delivered from all sin, to love God with all his heart, and to have all the mind which was in Christ, and forgetting the things which are behind, is eagerly pressing forward toward
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the mark. But as he puts not his obedience in the room of Christ, he is not discouraged when he falls, nor reasons himself out of the favour of God; but rising instantly by faith, he afresh with greater confidence than ever, commits himself to Jesus, who alone can keep him from falling, and give him strength to go forward. Tho' he desires the perfect love of God which casts out all fear; it is not in order to his future acceptance, or justification; for he looks simply to Christ alone for that, without casting an eye upon any thing he can possibly do to procure it; he obeys not in order to atone for his past sins, nor that he might abide in the favour of God, but because he loves God, and his commandments, which are not grievous, but his great privilege to walk by; and because he loves him, desires to be pure and holy, as he is. He knows that it is not **DO AND LIVE**, but **BELIEVE AND LIVE**; and that it is not, **DO**, and ye shall never die, but **BELIEVE**, and ye shall never die, as our Lord has said, "He that believeth, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth, shall never die." Yet he is sensible that if his faith is not productive of good works, it will necessarily die, he cannot keep it.

To conclude, a believer is justified, and abides in the favour of God, as long as he believes in Christ for his righteousness and acceptance; when he turns away from this, and as the foolish *Galatians* did, puts works in the room of faith, or looks to them instead of Christ, or doubts his justification because he has not been faithful, or is not more holy, he loses his evidence, and departs from God thro' unbelief; or if he sins that
grace

grace may abound, or makes void the law thro' faith, he can no longer believe, and grieves the spirit of God, puts away a good conscience, and falls under condemnation. But whilst we do not make Christ the minister of sin, but desire to fulfil the perfect law of liberty, and still by faith lay Christ only (exclusive of all other things) for the foundation, or expect salvation thro' him alone, and stand firm upon the same, even in spite of our falls and imperfections, our evidence will be stronger and clearer; and if we continually look to him for wisdom and strength, we shall grow in grace, go on steadily, and soon be rooted and established in the perfect love of God. These, Sir, are the sentiments which have occurred to me, in meditating upon that portion of scripture. If you will assist and improve them, by giving me your's, it will greatly oblige

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

F—. G—.



May, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH in my last I said a great deal of the true nature of faith, yet thinking I have not been explicit enough on so important a point, on which depends our present and eternal salvation, and consequently our present and future happiness; give me leave to explain it a little more fully, in a manner which I trust you will find consonant to the word of God: From which I shall endeavour to prove that we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law, and that we do

do not make void the law through faith, but establish it.

WHAT we may understand by the law is exceeding plain, whether we consider it as relating to every thing God has commanded and prohibited, or to the Decalogue, (the Ten Commandments,) which includes the whole. Every command and prohibition is spiritual, and must refer to the heart as well as life. This surely needs no proof; for certainly, what he forbids to be done he requires should be abhorred and not inwardly indulged, as he himself tells, "Whosoever shall look at a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already in his heart;" and so St. *John* concerning murder: And what he has commanded, we should undoubtedly love and treasure up in our hearts, as *David* did, who made it his meditation day and night. The law then regards not only the life, but every temper, thought, and the whole affections, agreeable to the prophet's enquiry, "How long shall vain thoughts lodge within you?" And that injunction, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners! and purify your hearts, ye double minded!" Or, the law may be reduced to these two particulars, the loving of God with all the heart, &c. and our neighbour as ourselves; for on these two hang all the law and the prophets. Now, if the law does thus extend itself to the thoughts and disposition of the heart, as well as to words and actions, who then is innocent? None; but all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

THE law, being broken, arrests every sinner, and, as it were, takes him by the throat, saying,
"Pay

" Pay me that which thou owest, or I will cast
 " thee into prison 'till thou payest the uttermost
 " farthing." What shall the sinner do in such
 a case? Indeed very many shut their ears, and
 fight against him, stifle their convictions, and
 harden their hearts, 'till they find him too strong
 for them, and will shew them no mercy, by
 fulfilling all the threatenings denounced against
 them, and inflicting the penalty annex'd. Others
 say, " Have patience with me, and I will pay
 " thee all: I will repent, go to church and sa-
 " crament; I will pray more, and do what good
 " I can, and then I hope thou wilt be pleas'd."
 To which the law answers, " All these things
 " thou oughtest to do, but they will not satisfy
 " for what thou owest; if thou hast nothing
 " better to offer, and dost not make immediate
 " satisfaction, I shall quickly, by the sword of
 " justice, cut thee off as a cumberer of the
 " ground." Others again say, " I truly abhor
 " myself and sin, and resolve to live godly, and
 " expect salvation only through Christ; but I
 " cannot believe that he will shew me mercy
 " 'till I am more humble, my heart more brok-
 " en, and pray and weep a little more." Or some
 will say, " I am not worthy:" But what says
 the law, the avenger of blood that is at their
 heels with a drawn sword? " For thy unwor-
 " thiness thou wilt never be rejected, nor for
 " those sins which have made thee unworthy,
 " but for thy unbelief, whereby thou givest God
 " the lie, and dishonourest his Son: And as for
 " you who stay away in order to get a price of
 " your humility to bring with you; know this,
 " that you shall be rejected for your worthiness,
 " and that you are seeking to satisfy my just de-
 T " mands

“mands with something that will fall infinitely short, and in no wise avail. Your crying sin is unbelief, which keeps you out of Christ, the city of refuge, out of whom mercy can be shewn to none; wherefore the longer you disbelieve, the more you provoke God; and that which you call humility, is pride, and abominable sin. It is therefore your wisdom to lay aside all excuse, no more to delay, but instantly to believe; for ’till then, I am in full force against you, and there is no mercy for you.”

By this we see how the law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ: May we not then discern clearly that it is our duty as soon as we are convinced that we are lost, instantly by faith to go to Christ? And that this is according to the will of God concerning such an one, and consistent with his word, is plain, from the case of the trembling Jaylor, who no sooner asked the interesting question, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved!” but he was answered, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;” and if we cannot believe, to complain to God of our unbelief, (the only hindrance to justification,) to plead his promises, what Christ has done and suffered for us, to strive to believe, and pray for power so to do; seeing that by the deeds of the law, by our humility and fitness, no flesh shall be justified, but by faith alone. Should we stay ever so long to bring something with us, we must part with all before we can be accepted. ‘Faith (as a judicious author observes,) ‘is imputed for righteousness, not because it carrieth any merit from us, but because it apprehends the goodness of God.’ Is it not then better

better simply to believe at first, or keep crying for faith, 'till that blessing is imparted? Yet this in no wise implies that we should continue in sin: No, not at all; for such would lose his conviction, desires and prayer for faith, and be in danger of perishing everlastingly. That we should believe, is an express command, and the greatest, as being the only means whereby the law is to be established; therefore 'till complied with, the law must condemn. "This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." 1. *John*, iii. 23. Is it not a melancholy truth, that a sinner when convinced of his lost condition, grieves more upon account of other sins, than that of not believing in Jesus Christ, and strives to be made holy, and to bring something with him for his pardon before he will believe! though he cannot be holy before he is justified by faith, and thereby complies with that commandment just now cited of believing in Jesus Christ.

BUT after we have believed, and are the children of God, has the law no more demands upon us? Yes, surely. It requires perfect obedience, and condemns wherein soever we come short: In this respect it is always the same. Is it possible then for a believer to abide in the favour of God, and retain his peace? as he will almost unavoidably sin as soon as he is justified, in thought, if not in word and deed. He most assuredly will if he still exercises faith; for to that all things are possible. There is no need at all for him to fall into doubts, or under condemnation, as unbelief is the crying sin, and nothing else will separate between God and the soul. As the

law requires more of those who are best qualified to keep it, so does it immediately take cognizance of the least deviation, even a roving thought, and he who is alive to God, is sensible of this; for the law will accuse and not be appeased 'till ample satisfaction is made. But the mind of man being blinded by unbelief and pride, does not, 'till after suffering severely from the lust of it, satisfy it, though it is in his power instantly to do it. Neither do men soon learn experience from what they have suffered, but commit the same folly again and again; and most do so all their life, for which reason they do not always go on smoothly and rejoice evermore. When the law arrests them for any sin committed, or duty omitted, or they are exercised with wanderings and dryness in prayer, they think themselves unworthy of any blessing, and through their unbelief, imagine God is as changeable as themselves, and then very dexterously reason themselves out of a sense of his favour. All this shews, that though they were justified by faith, they are now seeking to be justified by the deeds of the law.

THUS they go on, 'till being greatly distressed and entangled, they are convinced of their error, and constrained to believe as at first. Or they say to the law, " I am so shut up in prayer, " I feel so much evil in my heart; I have yielded so much to it, have patience with me, " 'till I am truly humbled for these things, and " find my soul a little more alive, and then I " hope to be more faithful." Yet all this while no notice is taken of their unbelief, no complaining of that. Hereupon the law severely condemns,

condemns, because Christ and faith are forgotten, and they are seeking to satisfy it by their own performances, and for that scourges them smartly, encreasing the stripes as they continue obstinately faithless; and if they persist in not coming to Christ as they are, but wait to bring something with them, it will drive them to desperation, if not afterwards slay them. And this pride of disbelieving the record God has given of his Son, and therefore not coming immediately to him when the law condemns, they call humility, and the believing that their backslidings are healed according to God's promise, they term presumption; whereas a believer should, when his conscience condemns him, apply instantly by faith to the blood of sprinkling, and say to the law, "What just demands hast thou against me, " seeing Christ not only atoned for those sins " committed before my justification, but for all " those that should be committed afterwards; and " did you not receive of the Lord's hands, when " he died on the tree, double for all my sins? " Go to Christ, my great High Priest, if thou " hast any farther demand against me; notwithstanding thou threatenest and scourgest me, I " will abide by this, that Christ died and gave " himself for me; and as I have no other refuge, " I will hide me in his bleeding side, and claim " him for my Lord and God; and there- " fore thou shalt drag me from him, whom I " will hold fast by faith, before thou shalt be " able to cast me into prison. It is true, I have " no other righteousness, nor atonement, no- " thing beside to depend upon, and I desire no- " thing more; wherefore I do believe, accord-

“to his promise, that he hath healed my backsliding, and doth not impute sin to me.”

THIS is the only way to pacify the law, to retain peace, and keep clear of guilt; but if once we begin to reason, and do not instantly exercise faith, we shall be brought low; and after the like manner should we act, even should we fall into wilful sin, if it is our grief; and this is well pleasing to God, because by this we prove that we do not seek his favour by our own works, but by faith, and thereby honour his son. By doing so, the soul shall keep his ground, rise higher, be more strengthened, and God more glorified; for “by faith ye stand,” saith St. Paul; and St. John to believers, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.” This and nothing else will quiet the law and our own consciences; because God is more honoured by our believing and submitting to his righteousness and method of salvation, than by our pretended humility, which doubts of his faithfulness and love, chuses a contrary way to be accepted, and prescribes for him; therefore nothing so greatly provokes him as unbelief, and will prevent us entering into rest, the kingdom of heaven. The law condemns a seeker and believer more for unbelief than any other sin, as being of a more aggravating nature, and all others proceed from it. It is certain from God’s word we shall be damned for no other; though by loving the world, continuing in sin, and in the neglect of the means of grace and good works, and the exercise of faith, whereby

whereby it is to be increased, we shall lose faith and a good conscience, and separated from Christ, or get into a dead, inactive, presumptuous Antinomian faith.

WE are now to prove that we do not make void the law thro' faith, but establish it. It has been already shewn that 'till we believe and are the children of God, we abide under his wrath. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," *John* iii. 26; consequently cannot keep the law, which runs thus, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, &c. and thy neighbour as thy self," comprising right affections, holy tempers, purity of thought, every good word and work. And before we can love God we must know that he has first loved us; but how shall we know this? Only by faith, for "He that believeth hath everlasting life." "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." "Ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." This faith then works by love; for thro' it, the Father's love is manifested to me, by the Holy Ghost, shedding it abroad in my heart, and by it I know that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me, and this creates love in me, to the God of my salvation. Beside, believing being the first commandment, and that which enables us to keep all the rest, as uniting us to Christ, we must of necessity believe if we would keep the law.

FAITH knows nothing but the wisdom and power of God, according to *St. Paul*, "Christ is the wisdom and power of God, to every one that believes,

believes, and therefore excludes our own; Christ strengthening me by believing in him, and relying on him for ability." "I can do all things." "Therefore in this sense, tho' I am weak I am strong." The true nature of faith is to look to God's word and his Christ; to try every thing by the former, and rely upon the latter for deliverance from the evils therein threatened, and for the fulfilment of those promises; it sees Christ in his sufferings, and how he lived whilst amongst the children of men, and therefore is willing to suffer with him, tread in his steps who has left us an example to copy after, and looks to him for grace so to do, that when he has finished his course, he might say with his Lord, "I have glorified thee upon the earth, I have accomplished the work thou gavest me to do." It looks also to the thoughts and intents of the heart, as well as to words and actions, and condemns all that God cannot approve of, and regulates the whole. It abhors sin, loves holiness, detests idleness, and like its author is continually going about doing all the good he can, lives peaceably with all men, loves and serves even his bitter enemies, delights in self-denial, and glories in the cross of Christ.

UNBELIEF operates quite differently, the nature of it is diametrically opposite. It denies the willingness, mercy, and faithfulness, (if not the power) of God to save; disbelieves what he threatens and promises, and credits what Satan suggests; rejects salvation by faith, and seeks it by works, if it seeks it at all; relies on its own wisdom, strength, goodness and worthiness, but has no dependence on Christ for any thing; from it springs all pride, self-will, haughtiness, impatience,

tience, discontent, murmurings, hard judging of God, blasphemy, evil surmises, tormenting fears, anxious cares, foolish desires, every evil thought, word and work; for it abases Christ, exalts itself, is big with presumption, and at last terminates in eternal despair, shuts them out of heaven, and secures them in hell; and tho' in believers it is greatly weakened, yet it shews itself whilst it remains, in almost all these particulars at different times, so that they often fear they shall perish, after all that God has done for them.

Now faith binds the strong man armed, unbelief, and casts him out; spoils all his goods, self-righteousness, self-will, self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-indulgence, evil reasonings, &c. and sets Christ on the throne, and makes him all in all. Wherefore faith strictly watches over every motion of the heart, and observes the first rising of sin and instantly looks to Christ, whereby it is kept down; or if thro' some means it should prevail, sincerely acknowledges the sin, and instantly applies the promises; and so resting on the immutability of them and Jesus Christ, goes on his way chearfully with a firm persuasion that all is forgiven, and that the Lord will increase his faith, and thereby destroy all sin, without perplexing and weakening himself with reasoning about the matter, and staying 'till he finds a greater degree of sorrow and remorse; and instead of crying out against the evil yielded to, exclaims against his unbelief as the cause of his departing from the living God; is satisfied that God loves him, and therefore will give him more strength, and save him to the uttermost from unbelief.

FAITH

FAITH is not startled at opposition, nor terrified when every thing makes against it, tho' blind reason and unbelief can see no way to escape, being inclosed as the *Israelites* with mountains of difficulties on each hand, a sea of affliction before them, and Satan's huge hosts behind; for faith by some means will find a passage thro' by dividing the sea, or levelling the mountains, (which our Lord tells us that even a grain of it can effect) or by a "stedfast resistance causing the devil with his hosts to flee from him"; or if it please God not to deliver after this sort, he will do it after a better, by death, which shall release his soul from its prison of clay, when upon the wings of faith and love it shall fly to God, take possession of an incorruptible inheritance, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are for ever at rest, and faith shall be improved to fight.

If it should be said, if faith does such mighty things, how is it that those who are the children of God by believing are overcome by sin? I answer, whereinsoever they are overcome it is thro' unbelief, and their not exercising the shield of faith; for when faith doth not operate, unbelief prevails, and either the one or the other influences; which is the cause why they are sometimes happy, strong, lively, and full of zeal, and by and by, wretched, weak, and just ready to give up all. Wherefore in order to prevent the doubting of their acceptance and giving way to sin, I have endeavoured to shew the dangerous consequences of unbelief, and would urge them to pray and watch against that more than any other evil,

evil, and never to lay aside their armour when they should use it; to cry constantly for the increase of faith, as that alone will keep them steady, even, comfortable, and growing. If you imagine I have ascribed too much to it, examine your bibles, there you will find what *Abraham* had to believe against when he was so strong in faith as to give glory to God; and there you will be informed, that by it we overcome the world, purify our hearts, quench the fiery darts of the wicked one; that all things are possible to him who believes: If ye will not believe, ye shall not be established, and if ye believe not, yet he is faithful, and cannot deny himself; and therefore if we are not saved, delivered from dangers, or comforted and supported under temptations, it is because we believe not, and not because he is not faithful to his promises. Wherefore by daring to believe when every thing is against us, sin rising up in the heart as mountains, the devil coming in as a flood, and sin yielded to, we not only bring great glory to God and honour the Son, but consequently our faith and every other grace, will be increased thereby, and we shall be strengthened, settled, established. Hereby we come away from all things to Christ, and make him our sure friend, and rest fully upon the veracity of God, and shew that we really seek salvation in, and help only from him thro' Christ; that we have an unshaken confidence in his goodness and faithfulness, which is more pleasing to him than any thing whatsoever: And, "these that thus honour him he will honour." For which reason we ought always to rejoyce when we fall under the most grievous temptations; because then we have the greatest opportunity of honouring

honouring God, by steadfastly believing and confiding in him.

WE will yet consider faith in another view, tho' we have already done it very particularly, that it may more clearly appear, that we do not make void the law thro' faith, but establish it, and that without it the precepts thereof can never be obeyed. It has already been observed, that the first thing required of every one who would keep the law, is, that they believe on him whom God has sent. This is really so, notwithstanding loving God with all the heart, &c. is said by our Lord to be the first commandment; because we cannot do the latter without doing the former, as faith works by love; none then can love before they believe. Faith is as a lion, undaunted, fearing nothing but the displeasure of God. It is as a lamb, meek and gentle, is at enmity with nothing but sin, and that it perfectly abhors and will totally destroy, if suffered to influence the heart. It is as a serpent, wise, for it makes Christ his wisdom. It is all love, reconciling us to our most inveterate enemy. It is full of zeal, abounding in good works, constraining us constantly like the author of it, to do all the good we can, giving us a willingness to suffer for our neighbour, if he might in any wise be benefited thereby. It rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing, in every thing gives thanks, because it is perfectly resigned to the will of God, and dependent upon Jesus Christ. It perplexes not itself how to perform this duty, or suffer that temptation or affliction; being persuaded that God will give sufficiency of grace for what he shall call us to, and also pardons what shall be wrong

wrong if humbly acknowledged, with confidence in his mercy and faithfulness. So by faith "we endure all things as seeing him who is invisible," and live wholly to God in all circumstances, at all times, by a constant dependence upon Christ and the promises. If these things I have intimated are not implied in living by faith, what could the prophet *Habakkuk* and the apostle *Paul* mean, by, "The just shall live by faith." That you may be convinced I have not gone too far in my description of the nature of it, read the 3d, 4th, and 5th chap. of the epistle to the *Romans*, the 3d, 4th, and 11th chap. of the epistle to the *Hebrews*; if these will not be convincing enough, go thro' the whole bible, especially the new testament, and you will surely then acknowledge the truth of it. Besides, I would appeal to every seeker, whether they do not find when they have a confidence in God, and in a measure renounce themselves, they go not on more comfortably, more steadily, and are more diligent in the means. And to all believers when they are strongest in faith and exercise it, if they do not delight more in the will of God, suffer with greater cheerfulness, rejoice in tribulation; and their peace, and joy, and love, be not as a river, and if they do not find all things possible. I would also ask both seekers and believers, whether they ever trusted in the Lord and were confounded, or if they ever sought him in vain. Were there more faith amongst professors, there would be more zeal and love amongst them, less of trifling, evil speaking, and unprofitable talk.

ANOTHER reason why faith performs so great things, and that we cannot make void the law thro'

thro' it, is, that it is an union with Jesus Christ, whereby we derive all that he is. In order to make it clear how necessary this union is, or that if it is commenced that it should be increasing, 'till the soul is intirely disengaged from all below, and wholly united to him, I shall endeavour to shew (believing few christians make any distinction) the difference between Christ, a prophet, priest, and king, and Christ made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Christ being our prophet, priest and king, implies only an outward relation; but made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, an inward. As a prophet, he teaches us our duty by his word, spirit, providence, servants, and judgments; but though men are taught, yet they turn not to God, and cannot, 'till Christ is made to them wisdom: When they become wise to embrace the truths that are revealed to them, and to walk according to the light they have received, he is called our wisdom, because he makes us wise unto salvation. As a priest, he has offered the sacrifice, and has done all the law required to make full satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and procure pardon and righteousness for sinners. He has enter'd into the holy of holies, the kingdom of God, and there *ever liveth to make intercession for us*; yet how few receive the remission of their sins! and wherefore? they receive not Christ made to them righteousness by an application of himself: For we are only righteous, by being in him *the Lord our righteousness*, as *Jeremiah* calls him; and if we were counted righteous any other way, than by being joined to him; it wou'd be great impropriety to call him our righteousness. Wherefore

fore to be justified by faith, must mean to be justified by being joined to Christ, who is our righteousness; by virtue of which union, his righteousness is imputed to us: Being in Christ the righteous, we must of course be righteous too, and therefore we are acquitted, as soon as this union takes place: To suppose we may be righteous without this, is, to suppose we may be righteous out of Christ, which cannot be. As a king, he has given us laws, with severe threatenings and encouraging promises annex'd, in order that all his subjects (that is, all mankind throughout the world) should punctually observe them; but 'till he is made to us sanctification, we have no power so to do: But then power is immediately communicated to us, when we are united to him, who is our sanctification. Wherefore sanctification begins as soon as we are justified; for as I observed before, that which is the cause of the one, is also the cause of the other. But above all, Christ is made to us redemption, implying a deliverance from all outward evil, as the grave, hell, &c. and a freedom from all inward evil, as sin, and whatsoever proceeds therefrom, as fears, cares, &c. And the latter may be accomplished, as I have already shewed, in this life. Reader, let me now beseech you to meditate upon these words; Christ made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. O! rest not 'till you have an interest in them all; for they are comfortable words, and full of matter. Yet, observe, they are not to be so understood as to set Christ aside, in his prophetic, priestly, or kingly office; for we shall ever want him in every respect the new testament sets him forth to us. And he is then truly our prophet,

prophet, when he is all our wisdom; and our priest, when he is all our righteousness; nor can we honour him truly as our king, till he is our sanctification and redemption.

Now it is plain, that this is not an Antinomian faith, but sound gospel faith. The one loves and countenances sin, renounces duties, despises the cross and self-denial, is averse to holiness and purity; dead, inactive, affecting neither the heart nor life: The other you see is the reverse to all this, and diametrically opposite thereto. Wherefore none who delight in sin, are not resolved through grace to be unreservedly devoted to God, should meddle with these things, the mercies, goodness, love, and promises of God, for they have neither part nor lot in them; but they should apply to themselves all the threatenings, take a view of the torments of the damned, consider of the majesty, power, justice, and severity of that God, whom they have highly provoked; and of his faithfulness to fulfil all that he has denounced against them; that if by any means they are brought to timely repentance, and convinced of their want of Jesus, they may wash themselves in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and be saved.

THAT you may be brought to experience all the saving power and efficacy of that faith which I have been endeavouring to explain, is the fervent prayer of,

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your very affectionate brother in the Lord,

10 JAN 60

F. G.

F I N I S.

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